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2018
Holiday
RECIPE CONTEST
WINNERS

BLUEBONNET NEWS
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2017 Wreaths Across America ceremony at Aggie Field of Honor.

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The Healing Power of Horses

Relief from ailments and disabilities can be found astride therapy horses.



WREATHS: WYATT MCSPADEN. HORSE: JULIA ROBINSON



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ON THE COVER Sherry Zawadzki's grand prizewinning recipe, *Sherry's Shrimp Clemenceau*. Photo by Jody Horton | Styling by Stephanie Bohn Philpott

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Respect the Name

If you are going to quote a famous Texan, you need to get the name correct [*Heck of a Comment*, Currents, August 2018]. It is David Crocket [sic] not Davey [sic]. Davey came from a reporter—see the trend here—and he hated the nickname. Please show the defender of the Alamo the respect he is due.

PAMELA BIFFLE | VIA FACEBOOK

Recipe Testing

I was born in Mexico, and at the time, we didn't use the jalapeño chile fresh [*The Secret to Salsa*, August 2018]. Try salsa cruda with serrano chile.

VIGUE PERRY | SCHERTZ

There are many of us who must eat gluten free, and the number is growing. Could you print a couple of gluten-free, low-carbohydrate recipes each month, along with your other delicious recipes—so we don't feel left out?

HARRIET L. BISHOP | KYLE



Do You Tweet?

I made up a whistled tune and repeated outside for several days. Sure enough, I heard a mockingbird emulate it [*The Original Texas Songster*, August 2018].

GARY LEWIS | VIA FACEBOOK

A Ramble Sample

The travel issue with emphasis on the Hill Country was great [*Hill Country Ramble*, September 2018]. I have been to a musical performance at Cave Without a Name and recommend it. Doug Baum and his camels participated in San Antonio's Fiesta celebrations this past year—that was a sight to behold!

REBECCA MASSIRER LOPEZ | CRAWFORD | HEART OF TEXAS EC



I love playing with “mockers.” You whistle, and they answer but one better. You can't beat them.

CHARLES BOOHER | VIA FACEBOOK

Lured to Luling

Lolling Around Luling [August 2018] aroused our interest, so we set off to explore Luling! Because it was Labor Day, both the oil museum and Luling Foundation were closed. We did walk through the grounds of the Zedler Mill. What hidden treasures! My husband and I plan on visiting again so we can discover more of Luling's history.

We have lived in Victoria almost eight years and have been to many places in Texas because they were featured in your magazine. They give us a feel of the people, culture and history of Texas.

LAVINA ZEMPEL | VICTORIA
VICTORIA EC

On Matters of Aid

As a Bolivian living in Texas, I was delighted to read that six electric cooperatives generously supplied electricity to three underdeveloped rural villages in Bolivia [*Bringing Light to Bolivia*, Currents, August 2018].

I'm not surprised that locals were appreciative. Both Texans and Bolivians share a mutual love of community. The electricity will certainly bring more commerce and opportunity to these remote villages.

MARIA INES GRANT | FORT WORTH
TRI-COUNTY EC

Very nice that our National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation would donate \$35,000 to Bolivian rural electrification. I do not begrudge the Bolivians, just want to see what can be done to help our own. Charity begins at home.

JOE ANNE DAIGRE | FRIENDSWOOD

On Top of the Globe

The Globe of the Great Southwest was started by Marjorie Morris, a professor at Odessa College [*All the State's a Stage*, August 2018]. My parents were hired by her to do summer Shakespeare festivals there for 10 years, from 1968 to 1978.

BRETT MCCALLY DAVIS | VIA FACEBOOK

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WEB EXTRAS
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HAPPENINGS

Tribute to Veterans

Comanche County sent much of its population to fight in World War II, Garry Steele says, and the community hasn't forgotten. That's why, on **NOVEMBER 11**, the Comanche County Museum holds its annual **VETERANS DAY LUNCHEON & TRIBUTE** at the **COMANCHE COMMUNITY CENTER**.

"We roll out the red carpet for them," says Steele, president of the museum's board of trustees and a Comanche Electric Cooperative member. "It's a somber but very special day." He says 250–300 veterans and their families typically attend the event, which is open to the public.

The co-op regularly supports the museum, which has 15 rooms of historical exhibits and is part of the Texas Forts Trail. "History is so important, and without the volunteers who work so diligently in these organizations to preserve our history, it would all be lost," says Shirley Dukes, communications specialist at Comanche EC.

INFO ▶ (325) 356-5115, comanchecountytxmuseum.com



MUSICAL NOTES

AN OFFBEAT LEGEND

Scott Joplin, called the "King of Ragtime," was born 150 years ago near Linden. He grew up in Texarkana before moving to Missouri. Joplin's music was featured in the 1973 motion picture, *The Sting*, which won an Academy Award for its film score. In 1976, Joplin was posthumously awarded a Pulitzer Prize for *Treemonisha*, the first grand opera by an African-American. Joplin was born November 24, 1868.

ALMANAC

Peace at Last

November 11 marks the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I. The conflict, at the time referred to as the Great War or the European War, started in 1914. It ended at the 11th hour on the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918.

About 198,000 Texans served in the armed forces during the war, and at least 5,170 Texas men and seven female nurses lost their lives.

Read about the extraordinary role Texas played in launching the U.S. into World War I on April 6, 1917, on Page 33.

YOUTH TOUR

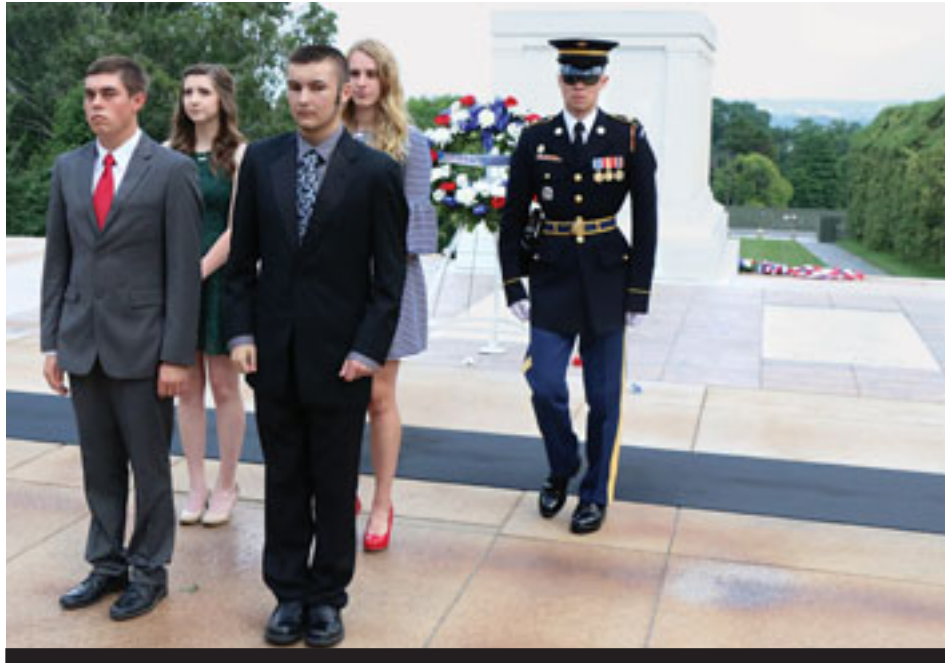
Wreath-Laying Honor

SINCE 1979, Texas co-ops have provided a special opportunity for teens to honor missing service members. Every summer, when Texas sends as many as 150 students to Washington, D.C., as part of the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, four are chosen to participate in a wreath-laying ceremony held at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

HALLIE RICHARDSON, a senior at Guthrie High School who represented South Plains Electric Cooperative on Youth Tour, participated in the ceremony in June.

“It was a big deal for me because it was more of a family history thing,” she says. Several of Richardson’s family members served in the armed forces, including her great-grandfather, Sgt. Elma LeFevre, who lost a leg during World War II.

Back row, from left: Hallie Richardson, South Plains EC, and Jordan Cochran, North Plains EC. Front row, from left: Caleb Miller, Lighthouse EC, and Riley Carter, Jasper-Newton EC.



Did you know?



VETERANS ACROSS TEXAS are remembered at Christmas through **Wreaths Across America**. [Read about the program's impact on Page 8.](#)

BY THE NUMBERS



That’s how much garbage each Texan generates every day, on average, according to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality. **America Recycles Day, November 15, is an opportunity to considering reducing that amount.**



SOCIAL STUDIES

Frisco’s Frenzy

Frisco tops the U.S. Census Bureau’s list of fastest-growing big cities in the nation, adding an average of 37 residents every day for a population jump of 8.2 percent between July 1, 2016, and July 1, 2017.

CoServ, the electric cooperative that serves Frisco, is well aware of the dramatic surge.

“**We see** the effects of the growth in every area of our organization—call volume, connects and disconnects, construction and work orders,” says Donnie Clary, CoServ president and CEO. “However, the growth is very evident when you are sitting in traffic gridlock.”

HISTORY LESSON

ELECTION HERSTORY

Two Texas women made history in the November elections 100 years ago.

Women obtained the right to vote in Texas primaries earlier in 1918, and they strongly supported Annie Webb Blanton, a teacher and suffragist, in the Democratic primary in the race for superintendent of public instruction. She went on to win in November, becoming the first woman elected to statewide office in Texas.

Nellie Gray Robertson of Hood County was elected the first female county attorney in Texas, defeating her male opponent by a vote of 446-2.

Circle
of
Life





Wreaths Across America program remembers veterans across Texas at Christmas

BY JULIA ROBINSON

ON A COLD SATURDAY last December, Desirée Gonzales awoke at 5 a.m. and drove to the Sutton County Cemetery in Sonora. Gonzales, along with her mother and brother, loaded dozens of unwieldy cardboard boxes onto the back of a golf cart and deposited them in each section of the cemetery.

Gonzales walked each row in the days before, marking on a map each veteran's headstone. She thought there might be 250, but there turned out to be 322. She checked and double-checked her list of names against the map of headstones then removed stacks of fragrant wreaths from each box. The goal: one wreath on each veteran's grave. Her group of extended family and volunteers lovingly fluffed the branches of lush balsam and straightened the bows of red ribbon. They created a pile of wreaths in each section of the cemetery, ready for family members or caring strangers to place on the grave of a veteran.

Gonzales spent the previous three weeks raising close to \$5,000 to cover the cost of the wreaths to be placed during the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony. Each wreath costs

Air Force Junior ROTC member Luis Barron during the 2017 Wreaths Across America ceremony at the Aggie Field of Honor in College Station.

\$15, and most come from the Worcester Wreath Company in Maine, though some originate with other vendors.

WYATT MCSPADEN

WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA grew out of an effort that started in 1992, when Morrill and Karen Worcester of the Worcester Wreath Company in Harrington, Maine, had extra wreaths near the end of their busy holiday season. The Worcesters arranged for the extra wreaths to be transported to Arlington National Cemetery and placed on headstones in one of the older sections of the cemetery.

The tradition continued each year as the Arlington Wreath Project, with the Worcesters systematically adding supporting organizations. Supporters included a trucking company that hauled the wreaths from Maine to Virginia, as well as local American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars groups that helped place the wreaths.

In 2005, a photo of snowbound wreaths at Arlington went viral, and requests to honor veterans in other state and national cemeteries poured in from across the country. The Worcesters formed the Wreaths Across America nonprofit in 2007 to help coordinate events and raise funds for the wreaths. Their mission: “Remember, Honor and Teach.”

By 2008, there were ceremonies in every state and 25 cemeteries overseas. In 2017, 1.6 million wreaths were laid at 1,433 cemeteries and memorial sites. Nearly 80,000 volunteers laid 245,000 wreaths at Arlington National Cemetery alone.

In Texas last year, 165,000 wreaths were placed on graves at 86 locations.

WEB EXTRAS

▶ Read this story on our website to see a map of the 86 Texas sites with Wreaths Across America ceremonies in 2017.



Clockwise from top: Wreaths Across America local organizer Desirée Gonzales prepares wreaths for the ceremony at Sutton County Cemetery in Sonora. Morgan Mathews remembers her best friend from high school, Shane Folmar, a Marine killed three weeks into his first deployment in Iraq in 2004. DuWayne Castro, left, and Mark Chavez salute a veteran’s grave. From left, Hayes, Luke and Cooper Hopkins help deliver wreaths in Sonora.



PHOTOS THIS SPREAD: JULIA ROBINSON





ELLEN FULLER OF BRYAN first encountered Wreaths Across America after her father, Navy Capt. Raymond O’Neil, was laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery in 2011. “During that first year after a loss, it’s an emotional time—a year of firsts without your loved one,” Fuller explains. “I heard about the program and said, ‘Let’s put a wreath on Dad’s grave!’ Then I wondered, ‘Who are these kind strangers?’ They were the WAA.”

Fuller started working for the organization in 2015 and last year helped coordinate ceremonies in the participating cemeteries in Texas. “To be able to pay it forward as a wreath-sister is why I do what I do,” says Fuller, a customer of Bryan Texas Utilities. “My wreath fam-

ily is the kindest people I know. Those kind strangers are now my family.”

Fuller invited Debra Coffey into the wreath family last year. Coffey’s father, Air Force Capt. Robert Russell “Bear” Barnett, was shot down during a secret combat mission over Laos in 1966, when she was 9. He was declared killed in action, but his remains were not recovered. Coffey attended a memorial service with her family at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio but never felt closure. She always hoped there had been some mistake and he was still alive somewhere. “I waited for so many years for him to show up to my classroom door,” Coffey says. As she grew older, she accepted his death, even though his remains hadn’t been returned. “I never thought I would still be alive and able to bring him home to Texas.”

But that changed when Barnett’s remains were identified



In 2017, 1.6 million wreaths were laid at 1,433 cemeteries and memorial sites.

and repatriated in 2017. Coffey attended a funeral service with full military honors at Texas State Cemetery in Austin. Her father was laid to rest near the Vietnam Memorial.

After hearing Coffey's story from Texas State Cemetery staff, Fuller contacted her and invited her to the 2017 WAA event in Austin. "I hadn't spent Christmas with my father since I was 9 years old," says Coffey, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative.

Groups across the nation began their ceremonies simultaneously at noon Eastern time December 16 with the national anthem. In Austin, Gov. Greg Abbott gave remarks before a

Clockwise from top: The viral photo from 2005 showing Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. The opening ceremony at Arlington in 2017. Naval officers place and salute a wreath at Ivy Green Cemetery in Bremerton, Washington.



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA IN 2018

13-fold flag ceremony and a 21-gun salute. Coffey presented the ceremonial wreath for the Air Force in remembrance of her father.

In Sonora, Boy Scout Troop 19 raised the American flag, and local veterans stepped forward to dedicate a wreath to each branch of the armed forces. With a wordless salute, the veterans took their places behind the wreaths for a moment of silence and remembrance.

A cold rain began to fall as a high school trumpeter played taps, then the 100 or so attendees fanned out across the cemetery, saying the name of their veteran aloud as they placed the wreath on the headstone.

Morgan Mathews of Sonora walked with her husband and two young sons to the very back of the cemetery, where her best friend from high school is buried. Marine Sgt. Shane Folmar was 21 when he was killed three weeks into his first tour in Iraq in 2004.

Mathews placed a wreath on Folmar's grave and took a photo with other classmates and friends. "You think you're never going to forget them, and then sometimes you wake up and realize you haven't thought about them at all," she says. "He gave his all for us. This is a little something we can do for him."

After lingering a few moments with Folmar's memory, Mathews walked through the rest of the cemetery with Gonzales and the volunteers. For veterans with no family in attendance, WAA volunteers read the veterans' names aloud and placed wreaths at their graves.

DuWayne Castro, chief deputy with the Sutton County Sheriff's Department, and Mark Chavez, a member of the Sonora High School class of 2018 who left for Marine Corps boot camp

At Texas State Cemetery in Austin, Gov. Greg Abbott with family and Scouts at Medal of Honor recipients' graves, below. A family friend places a wreath at the grave of Chris Kyle, highly decorated Navy SEAL and sniper, right.

in June, offered a matching salute as they finished laying each wreath. They followed the map of headstones until the last wreath was placed. The cold rain continued.

Coffey laid a wreath for

Wreaths Across America takes donations each year to support its annual wreath-laying program. The 2018 event is scheduled for December 15. For \$15, you can sponsor a wreath, either in honor of a living veteran or in remembrance of a deceased veteran. There are 111,000 active duty and 53,000 reserve service members in Texas and more than 1.5 million veterans living in Texas. Visit wreathscrossamerica.org by December 3 to participate.

If you would like to arrange a WAA ceremony at a cemetery in which a loved one is buried, Ellen Fuller, WAA volunteer co-chair in Texas, can help. "I know how much it means to surviving families and to the next generation to have veterans remembered," she says. Contact Fuller at (757) 478-4747 or texaswaa@gmail.com.

her father in Austin, finally home after more than 50 years. "The beauty of those wreaths with the simple green branches and red ribbons against the white of the headstones is so symbolic of hope, of lives lost and the sacrifice of so many lives to preserve the freedom we have," she says.

"It means so much to myself and my family that the WAA remembers our loved one at Christmastime. It had been so many Christmases gone," Coffey says. "Just seeing those volunteers spread out and put those wreaths on headstones—it's riveting. At the end of the ceremony, we didn't want to leave. We looked at it for hours."

See more of **Julia Robinson's** work at juliarobinsonphoto.com.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE: COURTESY WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

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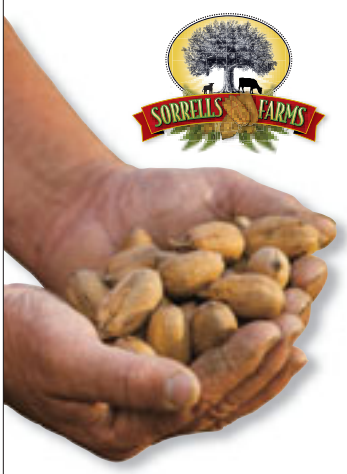
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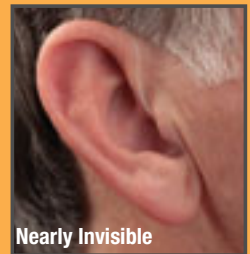
A study by the National Institute on Aging suggests older individuals with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop Alzheimer's and dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. They suggest that an intervention — such as a hearing aid — could delay or prevent this by improving hearing!

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LABOR PAINS

With **fewer doctors** and shuttered maternity units, **pregnant women** in rural Central Texas go **many extra miles** for prenatal care and **childbirth.**

Brittany Hardy of Paige and her daughter. When she went into labor with her first child, Brittany and her husband, L.J., had to make a dash to a hospital that was almost an hour away. 'It was scary,' she said. Even though all went well, she took no chances for the birth of her second child, and scheduled to have labor induced at a hospital.

Story by Mary Ann Roser
Photographs by Sarah Beal

Brittany Hardy was at home in Paige when she realized her first baby might be arriving in a hurry. She and her husband, L.J., jumped in the car and headed to the hospital — fast.



But fast is a relative term when home is in rural Bastrop County, and no maternity ward is close by. Hardy had been seeing an obstetrician/gynecologist who practices at St. David's Women's Center of Texas, where she planned to have her baby. The drive to North Austin takes 45 minutes to an hour from her home.

"It was scary," Hardy said of the frenzied dash she and L.J. made in March 2016. She got to the Austin hospital in time, but when she was pregnant with her second child, she decided not to tempt fate. She scheduled her son's delivery and her labor was induced at the hospital four days before his due date.

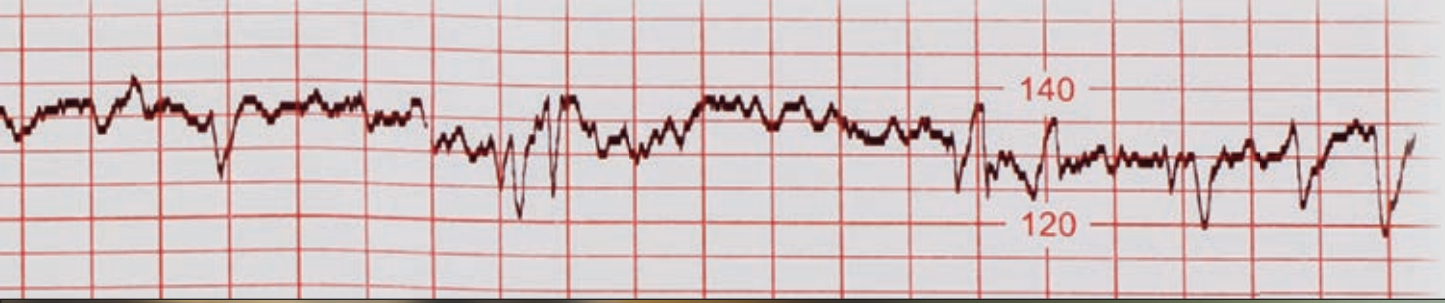
"I was terrified I was going to end up having him in a car somewhere," said Hardy, who is a member service representative for Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative.

In rural parts of Central Texas, that fear is very real. The nearest hospital maternity ward can be a longer, farther drive than it was just a few years ago.

That's also true in other communities across America, as more rural hospitals have stopped delivering babies or have shut down altogether.

The percentage of rural counties with hospital-based maternity care fell from 55 percent in 2004 to 46 percent in 2014, according to a March study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. Over that decade, the study found that pregnant women in remote rural areas had a higher risk of complication-

Continued on page 22



Stephanie Bise of Serbin and newborn son Jace Darell Bise. He weighed in at 8 pounds, 7 ounces on Sept. 21 at Baylor Scott & White

Medical Center in College Station, about 70 miles from Bise's home. She scheduled the delivery for a few days before his due date.

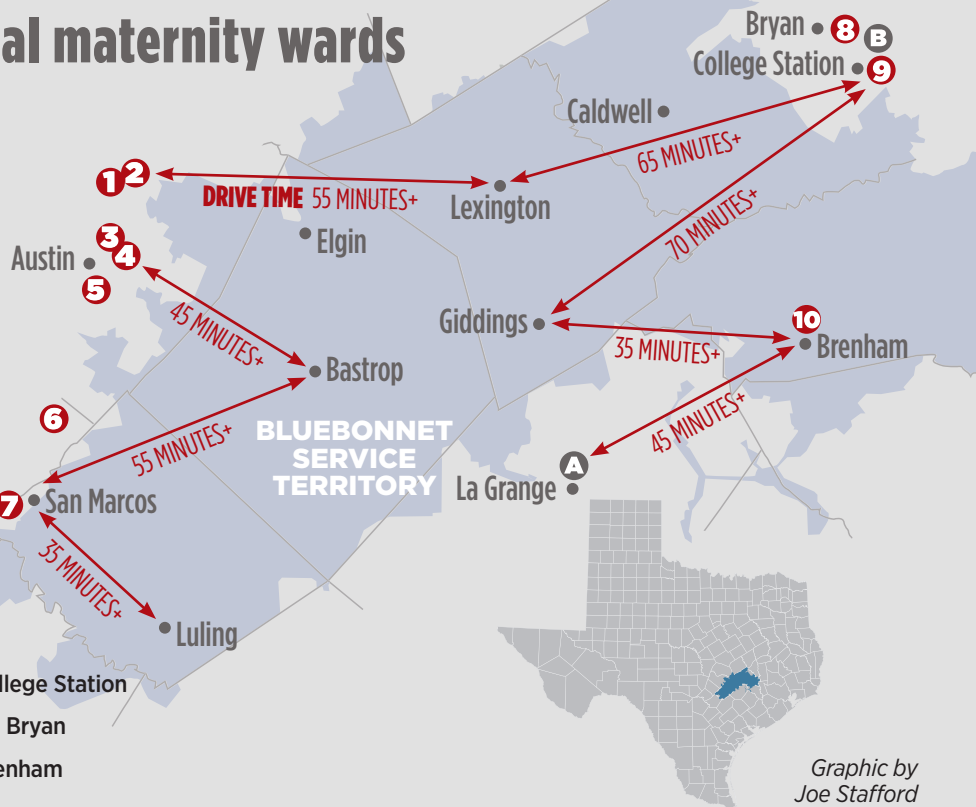
A shortage of hospital maternity wards

RECENTLY CLOSED

- A** St. Mark's Medical Center in La Grange, closed maternity ward September 2017
- B** College Station Medical Center, called The Med, closed maternity ward July 2018

CURRENT OPTIONS

- 1** Seton Northwest Hospital
- 2** St. David's Women's Center of Texas
- 3** Seton Medical Center Austin
- 4** St. David's Medical Center (Austin)
- 5** St. David's South Austin Medical Center (Austin)
- 6** Seton Medical Center Hays (Kyle)
- 7** Central Texas Medical Center (San Marcos)
- 8** Baylor Scott & White Medical Center — College Station
- 9** CHI St. Joseph Health Regional Hospital — Bryan
- 10** Baylor Scott & White Medical Center — Brenham



Graphic by Joe Stafford

Continued from page 20

related hospitalizations than women in urban areas, and their babies had higher rates of being premature, below weight or dying.

Many women who live in rural Central Texas who want a hospital birth like Hardy must travel an hour or longer when labor starts.

Over the past 13 months, two more Central Texas hospitals that serve rural women have shut their maternity wards: St. Mark's Medical Center in La Grange on Sept. 30, 2017, and College Station Medical Center, called The Med, in July 2018. Almost always, the reasons for the closure are financial.

"This is an alarming trend," said Don McBeath, director of government relations at the Texas Organization of Rural & Community Hospitals, known as TORCH.

In the United States, 87 rural hospitals closed between January 2010 and Sept. 21, 2018, according to the North Carolina Rural Health Research Program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Of those closures, 15 were in Texas — the most of any state.

In areas that lack a hospital maternity ward, full-time obstetrician/gynecologists are often also scarce. That means prenatal care can be sporadic for some rural women and non-existent for others, raising health risks for mom and baby.

It also means out-of-town trips can be necessary for checkups during pregnancy or for ultrasounds.

Some women in remote parts of West Texas have to fly to Lubbock for prenatal appointments, said Dr. John C. Jennings, a past

Prenatal care can be sporadic for rural women, raising health risks for mom and baby.

Out-of-town trips can be necessary for checkups during pregnancy or ultrasounds.

president of the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists who works with Texas Tech University's medical students and residents (doctors in training).

TORCH issued a report in February 2018 that says more than half of the 254 counties in Texas — 147 — have no obstetrician/gynecologist. Lack of access to prenatal care and childbirth care causes concerns about increased premature births and infant death rates, TORCH's report says.

FINANCIAL OBSTACLES

Medicaid payments, which cover more than half of the births in Texas, haven't kept pace with rising health-care costs, hitting rural hospitals the hardest. There, Medicaid

covers between 60 percent and 70 percent of births, McBeath said. Many of those hospitals struggle to survive, and opt to save money by closing costly maternity departments — especially those that handle fewer than 100 births a year.

Many rural hospitals told TORCH their obstetric units were losing \$500,000 a year.

In addition, legislation stalled in the U.S. Congress that would identify areas in the nation with the greatest shortage of obstetricians so doctors could be placed there temporarily in return for having their medical school debts forgiven. Such loan repayment programs help but aren't enough to meet the needs in rural Texas, McBeath said.

It's never an easy decision for hospitals to shutter a service they consider a moral obligation to provide, he added, "but if they don't stop the bleeding, they'll lose the hospital."

In the 1960s and 1970s, most of the 300 rural hospitals in Texas delivered babies. By January 2018, just 66 of the 161 remaining rural hospitals in Texas had maternity wards, according to TORCH.

In addition to the College Station hospital, McBeath said three other rural hospitals in Texas closed their maternity wards this year: Medical Arts Hospital in Lamesa, Yoakum Community Hospital and Good Shepherd Medical Center in Marshall.

Even some rural or suburban hospitals that are part of a larger health system have stopped delivering babies or never offered that service.

Construction is underway on the \$30 million, two-story Ascension Seton Neighborhood Hospital, at the intersection of Texas 71 and Texas 304 in Bastrop. The facility is sched-

uled to open in fall 2019, spokeswoman Erin Rogers said. It will fill a medical-care void in the area, with physicians' offices and women's imaging on the second floor, and a "micro-hospital" on the first floor, featuring seven inpatient rooms, seven emergency room beds and two minor procedure rooms. But it won't have a maternity ward.

In addition, none of Seton's existing rural hospitals delivers babies, including Seton Smithville Regional Hospital and Seton Edgar B. Davis Hospital in Luling, Rogers said. Seton Southwest Hospital in Austin stopped providing maternity care. The teaching hospital that opened last year in downtown Austin, the Dell Seton Medical Center at the University of Texas, also does not deliver babies. Expectant mothers are often referred to Seton Medical Center Austin.

Today, there are fewer family doctors in rural areas who deliver babies. Physicians don't want to be on call 24/7, and Medicaid payments are inadequate, said Tom Banning, CEO of the Texas Academy of Family Physicians.

"This is a challenge, but it's been a challenge for 30 years," Banning said. "If you want to really influence the workforce, you compensate doctors differently."

GETTING THERE IN TIME

Kaitlin Dannar had her first child at the 60-bed Baylor Scott & White Medical Center – Brenham in 2016. The Dannar family lives in Carmine in Fayette County, about a 20-minute drive to the hospital — "15 if you're in a hurry," Dannar quipped. She was a week past her due date when the hospital induced her labor, she said.

It is not unusual for women living in rural areas to schedule their baby's delivery or rent a room near the hospital as their baby's due date closes in.

Dannar said she had a good experience at the Brenham hospital, but would consider going to a birthing center next time, if it were near a hospital.

Stephanie Bise lives in Serbin, 7 miles southwest of Giddings, and scheduled the delivery of her first child at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center — College Station, an hour and 20 minutes from her home. The medical staff induced her labor a few days before her Sept. 22 due date. She received great care, she said.

Some women don't make it to their chosen hospital's maternity ward and end up in an emergency department somewhere along the route.

One rural hospital between Abilene and Dallas that doesn't have a maternity ward recently delivered two premature babies in the ER, McBeath said. As a result, neonatal intensive care teams flew in from the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, picked up the babies and flew back to hospitals in that urban area, he said.

The good news is the babies did well, he said. "The bad news is, those were Medicaid deliveries and cost taxpayers hundreds of thousands of dollars. Could that have been avoided if the

Continued on page 25



Above, Stephanie Bise of Serbin and newborn son, Jace Darell. She scheduled his delivery at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in College Station, more than an hour's drive from her home.

At left, Toni Kimpel holds one of the almost 800 babies she has helped deliver. The midwife provides prenatal care and home births. She lives in Brenham, where she operates Traditional Midwifery Services. She is also the owner and director of the Jubilee Birth Center in Bryan, which she opened several years ago because many clients wanted a midwife delivery, but not far from a hospital. Her business has grown from 30 births a year to more than 60, she said. (Photo courtesy Toni Kimpel)



Above, midwife Ulrike Schmidt's daughters Ayya, 9, left, and Ananda, 7, are excited about the imminent arrival of their little brother. Schmidt, of Bastrop, attends home births in Austin, Bastrop and surrounding communities. She is licensed, certified, and the founder of Heart of Gold Midwifery. As part of her work, she advises women with high-risk pregnancies to not plan home births.

Right, Whitney Faske prepares dinner at her home near Giddings while 6-month-old John bounces nearby. She and her husband, Dustin, have two other children: Max, 6, and Jolee, 3. All three children were born at St. David's Women's Center of Texas in Austin, attended by a midwife. Even though the hospital was an hour's drive, she wanted to be in a full-service medical center. Now, however, if she were to have another child, she said she would opt for the more personal experience of a home birth with a midwife.





Leigh Blankenburg of Lexington holds 2-year-old Justice. Alongside her are husband, Ace, and their four other children, from left: Liberty, 3; Langtry, 6; Trinity, 8 and Briscoe, 12. Leigh had four of her five children at home with midwife Toni Kimpel. 'God designed our bodies to have babies,' Leigh said. 'Recovery is so much better and more relaxing in your own surroundings.'

Continued from page 23

hospital had a maternal or neonatal care program? I can't know for sure, but my answer is yes."

CALLING ON A MIDWIFE

Midwives are helping to fill maternity care gaps in rural America. Two midwives serving in the Bluebonnet region said that many women who opt for a natural birth with the assistance of a midwife prefer to have their child at home or at a birthing center because they want a calmer environment than a hospital delivery room. Most of their clients seek out a midwife, regardless of hospital proximity.

"There's a certain type of woman who is attracted to home birth," said Ulrike Schmidt, a licensed and certified professional midwife who lives in Bastrop and attends home births in Austin, Bastrop and surrounding communities. "The care is so different."

Schmidt, founder of Heart of Gold Midwifery, once had to transfer a woman in labor at home to a hospital. The woman needed a cesarean section — a surgical delivery performed in a hospital. A woman with a high-risk pregnancy should not plan to have a baby at home, Schmidt said. "We'll err on the side of caution."

Licensed and certified professional midwife Toni Kimpel, of Brenham, operates Traditional Midwifery Services and opened Jubilee Birth Center in Bryan more than six years ago because of patient demand, she said.

The women wanted a midwife delivery but didn't want to have the baby at home or be far from a hospital, Kimpel said. Like other mid-

wives, she provides prenatal checkups throughout pregnancy and attends home births. Kimpel said her business has increased in recent years from 30 births a year to more than 60.

The ranks of nurse-midwives are growing. They managed 12.1 percent of vaginal deliveries in the United States in 2014, up from 10.5 percent a decade earlier, according to the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

The number of certified nurse midwives in Texas has increased from 282 in 2007 to 417 in 2017, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services' Health Professions Resource Center. A handful of midwives serve women in rural Central Texas in private homes, hospitals and birthing centers, including the new Bastrop Birthing Center, National Birth Centers in San Marcos and Kimpel's Jubilee Birth Center in Bryan.

The idea of educating maternity-care physicians and nurse-midwives side-by-side "so they learn to work together from day one," is being promoted by the national obstetricians/gynecologists group, but such a training system would face regulatory barriers, said Jennings, the Lubbock doctor.

Jennings isn't optimistic a solution will be found before the gap in rural maternity care reaches a crisis. Twenty-seven percent of obstetrician-gynecologists are at least 60 years old, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges. Having midwives regularly handle uncomplicated births and refer women with difficult pregnancies to collaborating physicians would help, Jennings said.

Leigh Blankenburg of Lexington had four of her five babies with Kimpel. The other one, her first, was born in a hospital. It was not a pleasant experience, Blankenburg said.

"There's something so calm and peaceful about birthing your baby at home. I wasn't confined to a bed ... like in the hospital. The protocol that went on just didn't seem natural. Even if there were a hospital next door, I would not choose it," she said.

Another of Kimpel's clients, Nancy Anderson, feels the same way. Anderson lives in West Point, a small community between Smithville and La Grange on Texas 71, and has six children. Her first child was delivered at a hospital. So was her second child, who was breech and had to be delivered by C-section. Anderson's other four children were born at home, with no complications.

But because of the unpredictability of childbirth, midwives don't always arrive in time for the birth. Anderson said her husband delivered two of those four babies born at home.

Whitney Faske lives outside of Giddings and also wanted a midwife to attend her baby's birth, but in a hospital. She chose a physician-midwife group that delivers babies at St. David's Women's Center of Texas in North Austin, where she had her three children. The drive takes an hour, Faske said, but she wasn't worried about the distance.

The important thing for her was finding a group practice that provided natural childbirth. The practice's birthing center would have been ideal, she said, but her insurance wouldn't cover the delivery unless it was inside a hospital. Faske said she wanted to be near a full-service medical center in case she or the baby had a problem.

"Looking back on it, I would be totally comfortable with a home birth," Faske said. Having a baby "is the most natural thing we can do." ■

Co-op board seats up for election in 2019

Bluebonnet members interested in serving on the co-op's Board of Directors can run for one of four seats up for election during the Annual Meeting on May 14, 2019.

Candidates can be nominated either by presenting an application for nomination with at least 50 signatures from co-op members in their respective districts or by paying a \$250 filing fee.

Bluebonnet's Board is made up of 11 directors who serve staggered three-year terms. The four seats up for election in 2019 are for District 1, Caldwell, Gonzales, Guadalupe and Hays counties; District 3, Bastrop County; District 5, Burleson County; and District 7, Washington County.

To run for the Board, candidates must be at least 21 years old, a co-op member in good standing, agree to a background check and meet other qualifications outlined in Bluebonnet's bylaws.

Details, bylaws and nomination applications are online at www.bluebonnetelectric.coop/About/Leadership/Becoming-a-Director.

Nomination application forms are also available at the co-op's member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart and Manor.

All candidates' petitions, filing fees and application for nomination forms must be submitted at any Bluebonnet member service center by 4 p.m. Feb. 13, 2019.

For more information, call a member service representative at 800-842-7708.

Career opportunities at Bluebonnet

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative Inc. is one of the largest electric cooperatives in Texas and has been serving its members since 1939.

The cooperative serves more than 98,000 meters and owns and maintains 11,600 miles of power lines across more than 3,800 square miles within 14 Central Texas counties.

In accordance with federal, state and local laws, Bluebonnet does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability unrelated to job requirements, genetic history, veteran status or any other legally protected status.

Bluebonnet accepts applications for its U.S. Department of Labor Certified Apprenticeship Program for lineworkers on the first Tuesday of every month, and for all other open positions as they become available.

Applications may be completed on the co-op's website. Go to bluebonnet.coop and click on About, then Careers, or click on Careers at the bottom of any page on the website.



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OFFICE CLOSING

Bluebonnet offices will be closed Nov. 12 for Veterans' Day and Nov. 22-23 in observance of Thanksgiving.

BOARD MEETING

Bluebonnet's Board of Directors will meet at 8:30 a.m. Nov. 16 at the Westin at the Domain in Austin.

CORRECTION

In the October issue of this magazine, on Page 18, a photo caption that accompanied the story 'The Evolution of Green Building' contained an error. The home was designed by Barley/Pfeiffer Architecture.

At right, Cathy Jarl of Elgin, left, registers with Bluebonnet's Angela Robles at the Sept. 29 event, where participants met solar installers, heard a Solar 101 session and got goodie bags and breakfast tacos.



Wynn Wylkerson, below left, a Bluebonnet member for more than 40 years, says he's 'tickled pink' about the solar installation at his Manor home. He talks about his 7.6 kilowatt array with tour participants Shirley and David Perez of Maxwell.



Right, Wesley Brinkmeyer, Bluebonnet's manager of energy services, welcomes tour participants before the Solar 101 session led by D.J. Rosebaugh of Texas Solar Energy Society.



Below, Gabriella Villebrun, 8, of Dale, launches a solar-powered car she assembled at the kid-friendly event.

Photographs by Sarah Beal



Solar Tour shows off the power of the sun

Yes, the sun shined.

Dark clouds and rain threatened, but didn't dampen the day for more than 90 attendees at Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's third annual solar tour on Sept. 29. The co-op hosted members and area residents at the new Lagos Elementary School in Manor. The Texas Solar Energy Society offered a detailed Solar 101 presentation, as well as an installer fair.



Watch a video about the Solar Tour at youtu.be/ACat6TrYONY

Kids had fun in the sun building and racing small solar-powered cars, courtesy of the nonprofit Solar Austin.

D.J. Rosebaugh of the Texas Solar Energy Society provided curious homeowners with a presentation on how home solar installations work, their costs, how effectively they reduce power bills and the best questions to ask installers.

Attendees asked lots of questions, wondering about the best location on a roof for solar panels, the varied costs and what return on their investment they can expect.

After the morning's events, which included breakfast tacos, coffee and goodie bags, attendees had the opportunity to take a self-guided tour of four area homes with roof-mounted solar panels. They talked with homeowners and installers about the costs, intricacies and effectiveness of solar arrays. Bluebonnet employees were on hand to answer questions about how homeowners' solar setups are connected to Bluebonnet's electric system.

One of the stops on the tour was the home of Wynn Wilkerson, who estimated he's been a Bluebonnet member for at least 40 years. "If you do the numbers of what it initially costs, what you were paying per month vs. now what you are paying, it's a no-brainer," Wilkerson said of installing a solar array.

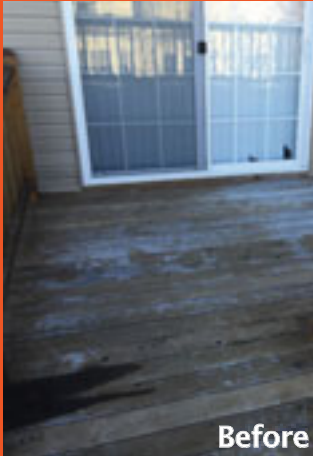
Another homeowner said she believes her system will start to pay for itself within five years.

Bluebonnet has seen an uptick in solar installations, averaging about 27 per month. As of Oct. 1, the cooperative had connected 594 solar arrays onto its system, with a total production capacity of more than 6 megawatts of power.

To learn more about renewable energy, go to bluebonnet.coop, then click Energy Solutions and Home Renewables & Green Rates, or call member services at 800-842-7708. Get more information from the Texas Solar Energy Society's website, txses.org.

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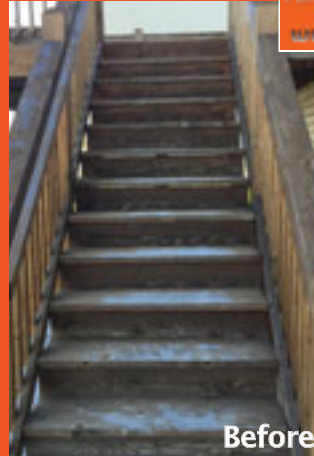
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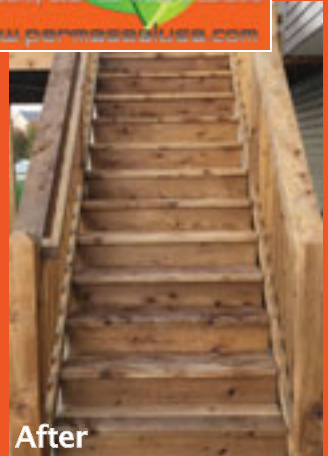
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After



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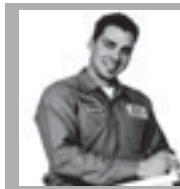
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DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, 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 – Austin, 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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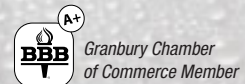


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World War I at the Doorstep of Texas

How border tensions and the cryptic Zimmermann telegram helped push the US into battle

BY GENE FOWLER

“GOVERNMENT SHOCKED AND AMAZED.”

The banner headline blazed across the front page of the *Palestine Daily Herald* on March 1, 1917. “Revelations of Past Twelve Hours Have Stirred the Capital as Never Before,” read the *Sherman Daily Democrat*. In newspapers across Texas, The Associated Press story revealed the discovery of a telegram sent from Arthur Zimmermann, Germany’s foreign minister, to the German ambassador to Mexico, Heinrich von Eckhardt.

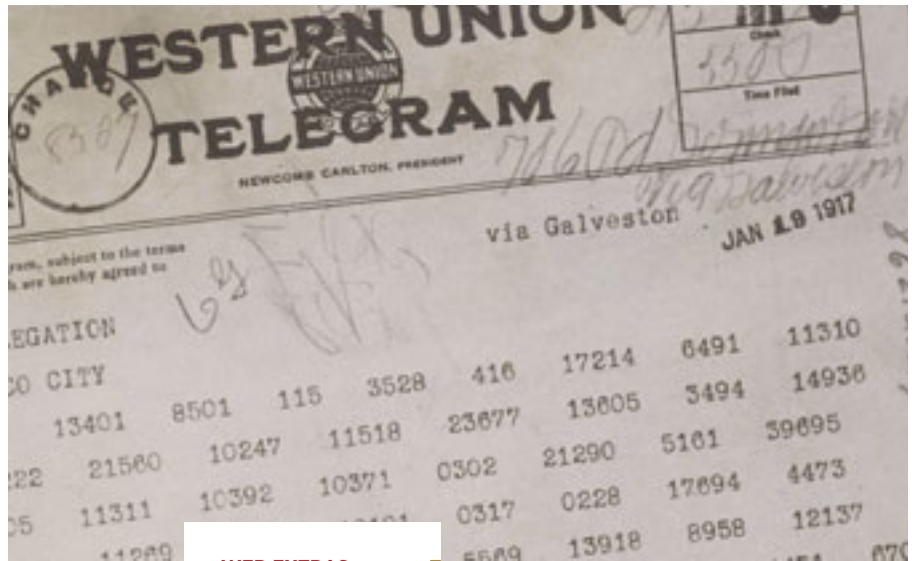
The incendiary missive outlined a potential Mexican attack on America.

When Zimmermann sent the coded message in January 1917, Germany feared it would not win World War I. The telegram, intercepted and decoded by British intelligence, confided that Germany would intensify its U-boat warfare, attacking the British naval blockade and merchant ships of neutral powers.

If that action drew America into the war, Zimmermann instructed, von Eckhardt should propose an alliance to Mexican authorities. If Mexico attacked the United States, they reasoned, American troops would thus be sent to fight Mexico instead of to Europe. If the effort was successful, Germany promised Mexico it could reclaim Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

The plan may seem far-fetched today, 100 years after the end of World War I, but it’s easy to see why border states, and the entire nation, viewed it with grave concern. Mexico had been embroiled in revolutionary turmoil since 1910, and sporadic unrest had spilled across the border. Even before the telegram, Germans had offered support to Mexican leaders, including Pancho Villa.

Two months later, Mexican combatants attacked the Texas hamlets of Boquillas and Glenn Springs. President Woodrow Wilson, who won re-election in 1916 on



WEB EXTRAS

► Read this story on our website to see the full Zimmermann telegram and the decoded message.

the slogan, “He kept us out of war,” sent Army Gen. John J. Pershing and 6,000 American troops into Mexico in pursuit of Villa.

“Events associated with Mexico overshadowed the war across the Atlantic on the front pages of Texas daily newspapers and in the minds of everyday Texans,” wrote historian Patrick L. Cox in the July 2001 issue of *Southwestern Historical Quarterly*. News of the Zimmermann telegram, Cox noted, “hit the streets of Texas like a political hurricane.”

Historian Michael C. Meyers traced the genesis of the telegram to a document known as the *Plan de San Diego*. The plan called for a revolution to begin in the southwestern U.S. on February 20, 1915, that would liberate Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and parts of California from U.S. control. “We must not lose sight of Mexico,” the *Frankfurter Zeitung* editorialized April 15, 1915, “because Mexico will become the focus of a gigantic movement of world power.”

As American authorities worked to authenticate the telegram, Wilson wanted

legislation passed that would arm American merchant vessels and authorize their self-defense. Opponents of the move generally changed their minds after the telegram’s publication March 1. Isolationists also supported the United States’ declaration of war April 6, 1917.

The Zimmermann telegram, along with Germany’s waging of unrestricted submarine warfare, is often cited as a major impetus for America’s entry into the war. But the most recent major work on the storied communiqué, the 2012 book *The Zimmermann Telegram: Intelligence, Diplomacy, and America’s Entry into World War I* by military and intelligence historian Thomas Boghardt, contends that the Zimmermann telegram was much less important as a motivation to declare war than the German declaration of open season on American merchant ships.

Still, Austrian native and North American immigrant Friedrich Katz, who became one of Mexico’s most important historians, said in his 1981 volume, *The Secret War in Mexico: Europe, the United States, and the Mexican Revolution*, the Zimmermann telegram “has become one of the great spy stories of all time,” albeit one that “boomeranged.”

Writer Gene Fowler specializes in Texas history.





YOU COULD SAY THAT WE'RE BLESSED WITH TWO HOLIDAYS. Months before the official holidays roll in, *Texas Co-op Power* staff gets the pleasure of feasting (all in the name of testing, of course) on your cherished recipes as part of our annual holiday recipe contest. The fragrances of buttery pastries, minty confections and homey dinners fill the air—and, best of all, we get to share in your holiday memories. Among this year's winners: a riff on a Creole classic, a rich pecan torte crowned with creamy glaze, and bacon-spiked meatballs brightened with a lemony herb topping—just the kind of recipes that you want to tuck into on cold winter evenings. From our tables to yours, we wish you a delicious holiday season.

As long as you're showing off your cooking mastery between Thanksgiving and Christmas, consider entering your pride and joy in the 2019 Holiday Recipe Contest. The deadline isn't until June 10, but you can enter now on our website, while this season's rave reviews are still making you smile.

PAULA DISBROWE, FOOD EDITOR



\$1,000 GRAND PRIZE
Sherry's Shrimp
Clemenceau

SHERRY ZAWADZKI | HEART OF TEXAS EC

"My husband loves shrimp, so I'm constantly looking for and creating new recipes for him," Zawadzki says. Her shrimp Clemenceau, a classic New Orleans and Creole dish, is one of his favorites—and this year's grand prizewinner. Serve it for dinner or as a special brunch (topped with a poached egg) with a tomato salad or fresh crudité's.

Vegetable oil

- 2 large Idaho russet potatoes, cut into small dice
- 2 teaspoons olive oil, plus more as needed
- ½ cup chopped red or yellow onion
- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided use
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper, divided use
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 6 ounces boiled ham, cut into small dice
- ¼ cup frozen baby peas
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic

- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
- Prepared hollandaise sauce, for serving (optional)
- Lemon wedges, for serving (optional)

1. In a deep pot or electric fryer, heat 2–3 inches of vegetable oil to 360 degrees. Adding potatoes in batches, fry until golden brown, stirring as necessary to avoid clumping, about 10–12 minutes. Remove the potatoes with a slotted spoon, allowing excess oil to drain, and transfer to a plate lined with paper towels.

2. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot and shimmering, add the onion and shrimp and season with ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper and cayenne. Cook, stirring, 2 minutes. Add the ham, peas, garlic, potatoes and the remaining salt and pepper. Cook, stirring, 3 minutes, then add the butter and cook 1–2 additional minutes until the ingredients are combined. Serve warm, drizzled with hollandaise and a squeeze of lemon, if desired. ▶ Serves 4.

PHOTOS: JODY HORTON, STYLING: STEPHANIE BOHN, PHILPOTT



\$500 BEST SWEET Pecan Torte With Creamy Glaze

TAMMY RAINWATER STARR | DEEP EAST TEXAS EC

This elegant dessert, perfectly at home on a pretty holiday table, is a mashup of the best pecan recipes. The torte combines the richness of pecan pie filling with a delicious cookie-like base and creamy glaze. Serve it with strong coffee for an afternoon get-together or as punctuation to a holiday dinner.

TORTE

- 2¼ cups finely chopped pecans
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, plus more for pan
- 3 eggs, separated
- ¼ cup shortening
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup flour
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ cup buttermilk

GLAZE

- ¾ cup half-and-half
- 6 tablespoons light corn syrup
- ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1. TORTE: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spread chopped pecans on a baking sheet and toast lightly, about 5 minutes. Heavily butter the inside of a 10-inch springform pan and sprinkle in ¾ cup of the toasted pecans, coating the bottom and sides.

2. In a small mixing bowl, beat egg whites on medium speed until stiff peaks form. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening and sugar. Add egg yolks, vanilla, flour, baking soda, buttermilk and ¾ cup of

toasted pecans. Fold in egg whites gently. Bake 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack about 10 minutes, then turn out onto a parchment- or waxed paper-lined rack and cool completely.

3. GLAZE: In a small saucepan, combine half-and-half, corn syrup, sugar, egg yolks and cornstarch. Whisk over medium heat until a low boil begins. Continue to boil about 1 minute or until mixture begins to thicken. Whisk in butter and vanilla and remove from heat. Allow to cool completely before spreading glaze over top of torte. Sprinkle top of glaze with remaining toasted pecans. ▶ Serves 6-8.

COOK'S TIP Torte may be baked in a regular 9-inch round pan. It also can be cut horizontally and spread with glaze between layers as well as on top, if desired.



\$500 BEST SAVORY
Osso Buco-Style
Meatballs

PATRICK SPAGON | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

Gremolata is a traditional Italian condiment that's often used to enhance rich meat dishes like these luscious bacon and beef meatballs. Spagon suggests serving the warm meatballs over polenta or with pasta or steamed rice.

MEATBALLS

- 1 slice whole wheat bread
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 ounces (about 3 slices) smoked bacon, finely chopped
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon salt

Finely ground pepper (5 twists of mill)

- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped shallots

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 cup breadcrumbs

SAUCE

- 2 tablespoons (1/4 stick) butter
- 1 medium sweet onion, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup finely chopped carrot
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) chopped Italian tomatoes, undrained

GREMOLATA

- 1 1/2 tablespoons finely grated lemon zest
- 1/3 cup minced parsley
- 1 medium clove garlic, finely minced

1. MEATBALLS: Combine the bread and milk in a large bowl. When bread is soft, mash it with a fork (or your fingers), then add the beef, bacon, egg, salt, pepper, parsley, Parmesan and shallots to the

bowl and mix thoroughly. Make meatballs 1 1/2–2 inches in diameter.

2. Heat the olive oil in a 1-inch, high-sided skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge the meatballs in the breadcrumbs, then brown them on all sides. Remove meatballs from skillet and set aside.

3. SAUCE: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Add the butter to the drippings in the skillet. Add the onion, carrot and celery and cook, stirring, until softened. Add the wine and simmer 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes (with liquid) and simmer an additional 5 minutes.

4. Transfer the sauce and meatballs to a 3-quart casserole dish, cover and bake 1 hour. Allow the meatballs to cool briefly while you prepare the gremolata.

5. GREMOLATA: Combine the lemon zest, parsley and garlic in a small bowl. Serve the warm meatballs with a sprinkling of gremolata over each portion. ▶ Serves 6–8.



\$250 HONORABLE MENTION

Helen's Danish Kringle

LINDA RUSH | SAM HOUSTON EC

DOUGH

- 2 cups flour
- 1½ tablespoons sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup shortening, softened
- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter, softened (or ½ cup butter in lieu of shortening)
- ½ cup milk, scalded
- 1 egg, separated
- ¾ ounce active dry yeast
- ¼ cup warm water (110–115 degrees)

PECAN FILLING

- ¼ cup (½ stick) butter
- ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 cup finely chopped or ground pecans

POWDERED SUGAR ICING

- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup powdered sugar

1. DOUGH: Measure flour, sugar, salt, shortening and/or butter into a bowl and blend well with a pastry cutter. Cool milk slightly, then stir in egg yolk (reserve white for later use). Pour into bowl with first ingredients.

2. Add yeast to warm water and let stand a few minutes. Add to all other ingredients, mixing thoroughly. Scrape dough from sides of bowl (it will be very soft). Cover tightly and chill 2 to not more than 48 hours in refrigerator.

3. FILLING: Prepare filling before shaping kringles. Cream butter and sugar until well mixed, then blend in pecans.

4. ICING: Over low heat, melt butter with milk. Remove from heat and add vanilla. Whisk in powdered sugar until smooth, adding a bit more milk if necessary for a smooth consistency.

5. Line a baking sheet that is at least 18-by-12 inches (or two smaller sheets) with parchment paper.

6. Divide dough into halves, returning one half to the refrigerator. Beat the egg white. On a floured surface, roll the first dough half into a 6-by-18-inch rectangle. (Dough will be very tender.) Spread 3-inch center strip with half of beaten egg white, then carefully spread with half of filling. Fold over one side of dough and then the other with 1½-inch overlap to cover filling. Pinch dough to close the fold. Pick up kringle carefully and arrange, seam side down, on baking sheet in horseshoe shape; pinch ends. Shape second kringle as first using remaining dough from refrigerator and place on baking sheet.

7. Cover kringles with a kitchen towel and let rise in warm place 30–45 minutes, or until dent remains when pressing finger gently on side of dough and dough is no longer cold. Place baking sheet in an oven that has been heated to 400 degrees and bake 20–30 minutes until golden brown.

8. Remove from oven and spread with icing while hot. Cut into wedges to serve.

► Serves 8–10.



\$250 HONORABLE MENTION

Dark Chocolate Mint Brownies

JILEEN PLATT | BOWIE-CASS EC

BROWNIES

- 4 ounces unsweetened baking chocolate, broken into pieces
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup flour

MINT FROSTING

- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) butter, softened
- 2½ cups powdered sugar

- 3 tablespoons milk
- ¾ teaspoon peppermint extract
- 3 drops green food coloring

CHOCOLATE DRIZZLE

- 2 ounces bittersweet baking chocolate, broken into pieces
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and apply nonstick spray to a 16-by-10½-inch jelly roll pan.

2. BROWNIES: Place the chocolate and butter in a medium microwaveable bowl. Melt in microwave 1 minute. Remove bowl from microwave and stir mixture until chocolate is completely melted. If needed, return bowl to microwave and heat 30 seconds longer. Set aside.

3. In a large stand mixer, beat together eggs and sugar. Add flour and mix on low until only a few white streaks remain. Pour in melted chocolate mixture while mixer is on low and mix until just combined.

4. Pour mixture on prepared jelly roll pan and spread evenly with a spatula. Place pan in oven and bake approximately 20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Remove pan from oven and let cool completely.

5. FROSTING: In a medium mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until fluffy. Add milk, peppermint and food coloring. Beat until well combined. Spread frosting on cooled brownie layer and place in refrigerator to chill.

6. DRIZZLE: Place the bittersweet chocolate and butter in a small microwaveable bowl. Melt mixture in microwave 1 minute. Remove bowl from microwave and stir mixture until chocolate is completely melted. If needed, return bowl to microwave and heat 30 seconds longer.

7. Remove pan from refrigerator. Using a small spoon, drizzle melted chocolate mixture diagonally, horizontally and vertically until all chocolate is used. Return pan to refrigerator and let chill completely. When ready to serve, cut the bars into 1½–2-inch squares. ► Makes about 30 squares.

WEB EXTRAS ► Read these recipes on our website and check out all the winners from the previous 14 Holiday Recipe Contests.

\$100 Recipe Contest

April's recipe contest topic is **DIY Take-out**. In conjunction with our special travel issue that month, we'll feature your best treats for road trips. What do you pack in your picnic basket? The deadline is **November 10**. Readers whose recipes are featured will receive a special *Texas Co-op Power* apron.

ENTER ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.

Abandoned Buildings

ONCE VITAL PARTS OF THE COMMUNITY, abandoned buildings now stand quietly as we go about our daily lives. Amidst the ruin there is beauty, as the surrounding landscape slowly takes over. **GRACE ARSIAGA**

WEB EXTRAS ▶ See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.

▼ **AMBER BENSON**, Grayson-Collin EC: Sunset at Big Bend Ranch State Park.



▲ **CAROL HOLBERT**, Concho Valley EC: Bob's Oil Well in Matador.



◀ **REAGAN FERGUSON**, Central Texas EC: Inside an old West Texas schoolhouse.

▶ **BOYD DREYER**, Pedernales EC: An old farmhouse.



▲ **REBECCA DAUGHTRY**, San Patricio EC: Travel the back roads of Texas and you'll find this abandoned treasure from generations past at the corner of FM 796 and 797.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

MARCH TREES	DUE NOVEMBER 10
APRIL MILES AND MILES OF TEXAS	DUE DECEMBER 10
MAY ON THE RANCH	DUE JANUARY 10

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo.

ONLINE: Submit highest-resolution digital images at TexasCoopPower.com/contests. We do not accept entries via email. **MAIL:** Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We regret that *Texas Co-op Power* cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.



Pick of the Month Country Christmas Ball

Lockney November 30
(806) 983-6228

The sounds of Wendell Sollis and the Sidekicks All Star Band will stir dancers all evening with big band and western swing standards. An auction with paintings by Kenneth Wyatt is part of a fundraiser that benefits the volunteer fire departments in Lockney and Floydada. South Plains and Lighthouse electric cooperatives are sponsors of the ball.

November

7

Blanco Neal Ford & Friends, (830) 833-1227, nealfordmusic.com

9

Waco [9-11] Brazos Fine Art Show and Gala, (830) 708-1436, pactart.org/bfas

Venus [9-11] Steampunk November, (817) 680-8483, steampunknovember.com

10

Burton Big Star Texas Night, (979) 525-5048, burtontexas.org/bigstartexasnight

Crockett Tony Orlando, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

Hamilton Holiday Market & Book Sale, (254) 372-4572

Hidalgo Got Faith Presents Jeremy Camp and Matthew West, (956) 358-2755, gotfaithmusic.com

Lumberton Lions Strides Walk & Car Show, (409) 898-3797, setxstrides.com

Streetman Richland Chambers Lake BBQ & Jamboree, (903) 389-7586, communitycareclub.com

Keller [10-11] Sharing the Joy Gift Fair, (817) 431-1332, www.kellerumc.com/events/sharing-the-joy

16

Athens Pea Pickers & Single Peas Square Dance Club, (903) 790-4565, etsrda.com

November 10
Hamilton
Holiday Market & Book Sale



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Ingram [16-17, 23-25, 30-Dec. 2] *Sanders Family Christmas*, (830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

17

Bonham Christmas Parade, (903) 583-4811, fannincountytx.com

Lake Jackson Festival of Lights, (979) 415-2600, lakejackson-tx.gov

Rockdale Rockdale Uncorked Swirl & Shop, (512) 446-2030, rockdalechamber.com

22

Hunt [22-25] Thanksgiving at Mo, 1-800-460-4401, moranch.org

27

Waxahachie Christmas Parade & Tree Lighting, (469) 309-4040, waxahachiecvb.com/events

29

Ennis Lights of Ennis Parade and Block Party, (972) 878-4748, visitennis.org

30

Brenham [30-Dec. 1] Christmas Stroll & Lighted Parade, (979) 836-3696, visitbrenhamtexas.com

November 30-December 1
Madisonville
Gingerbread Market



Clifton [30-Dec. 1] Arts of Christmas, (254) 675-3724, bosqueartscenter.org

Madisonville [30-Dec. 1] Gingerbread Market, (979) 703-6901, visitmadisonville.org

New Braunfels [30-Dec. 1] Christkindmarkt, (830) 542-8448, christkindmarktbnbt.org

December

1

Groves Lighted Christmas Parade, (409) 962-3631, grovescofc.com

Henderson Lighting of the Trees at Lake Forest Park, (866) 650-5529, visithendersontx.com

McAllen Holiday Parade, (956) 681-1200, mcallenholidayparade.com

Hillsboro [1-2] Hillsboro Heritage League Tour of Homes, (254) 266-4484, hillsborochamber.org

Sherman [1-2] Christmas Pops, (903) 267-3227, shermansymphony.org

7

Austin Angels Among Us Breakfast, (512) 444-7199, bgcaustin.org/events/angels-among-us-breakfast

Submit Your Event!

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

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Waco's Mysterious Mammoths

Massive bones discovered along Bosque River transport visitors to the Pleistocene ice age

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

THE WOODLANDS ALONG THE BOSQUE River on the outskirts of Waco long obscured an astonishing paleontological discovery: partially fossilized remains of a nursery herd of Pleistocene mammoths.

The wooded land that covered the mammoths is cut by ravines washed out by periodic floodwaters. In 1978, in one of these ravines, two fossil collectors unearthed an enormous bone.

The bone was identified by scientists at Baylor University as the femur of a Columbian mammoth. Baylor quickly organized a team and began excavation of the site. A centimeter at a time over the next 30 years, Baylor scientists exposed a glimpse of life during an ice age in Central Texas, identifying the bones of 23 Columbian mammoths, a prehistoric camel and the tooth of a juvenile saber-toothed cat in an area now known as **Waco Mammoth National Monument**.

Unlike other similar discoveries, the bones of the Waco mammoths have not completed the fossilization process by which minerals gradually replace the organic material of the bones and transform them into a stonelike solid. "They are extremely fragile," says Anita Benedict, collections manager of Baylor's Mayborn Museum. "Before bones were removed from the site, they had to be stabilized inside plaster jackets."

The skeletons of the animals that made up the original nursery herd, a group that included females and juveniles of all ages, are now housed at the Mayborn.

How the animals died is still a mystery. Early scientific evidence pointed to a catastrophic flood about 65,000 years ago that trapped mammoths from the nursery herd in a steep, slippery-sided channel where they drowned. Sediment from later floods buried the remains.

More recent studies suggest that the mammoths did not all die at once but rather in a series of events over many years. A second flooding event produced an uniden-



tified animal associated with a juvenile saber-toothed cat, and a third, approximately 15,000 years later, left behind the skeleton of a large bull mammoth, a juvenile and an adult female. These remains are still at the site.

Because the juvenile lies across the massive 16-foot tusks of the bull, early theories posited that he might have been trying to lift the calf above the floodwater. Experts doubt this. "Adult male elephants certainly never do good deeds like saving calves," says University of Nevada anthropologist Gary Haynes, who has spent 40 years studying mammoths. "The bones of the bull and the calf at first glance seem to tell an inspiring story of failed rescue, but it is far more likely that the carcasses of the two mammoths were merely washed together after they were dead."

The Brazos and Bosque rivers converge northwest of downtown Waco, and some experts speculate that a drought may have drawn the large number of mammoths to the plentiful water of the Waco area, where flash floods led to their deaths. Or could it have been a poisonous algae bloom? The jury is still out.

A life-size mural of a Columbian bull mammoth inside the door of the \$3.5 million pavilion that houses the original dig

Visitors overlook the site of the nation's only recorded discovery of a nursery herd of Columbian mammoths.

site provides visitors with a dramatic view of the creatures. Dwarfing their distant cousins, the smaller woolly mammoths, Columbian mammoths grew to a height of 14 feet at the shoulder and weighed 8–10 tons. They lived in the temperate grasslands of the southern United States, Mexico and Central America. A warmer climate may mean that they had less hair than the woollies, which occupied colder northern regions. The discovery of bits of bone in the soil when holes were drilled for the pavilion indicates that other skeletons may still rest below the surface.

The site in Waco opened to the public near the end of 2009, and in 2015, President Barack Obama signed an executive order that made it a national monument and part of the National Park Service. Guided tours of Waco Mammoth National Monument are offered every 30 minutes, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., seven days a week.

Martha Deeringer, a member of Heart of Texas EC, lives near McGregor.

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