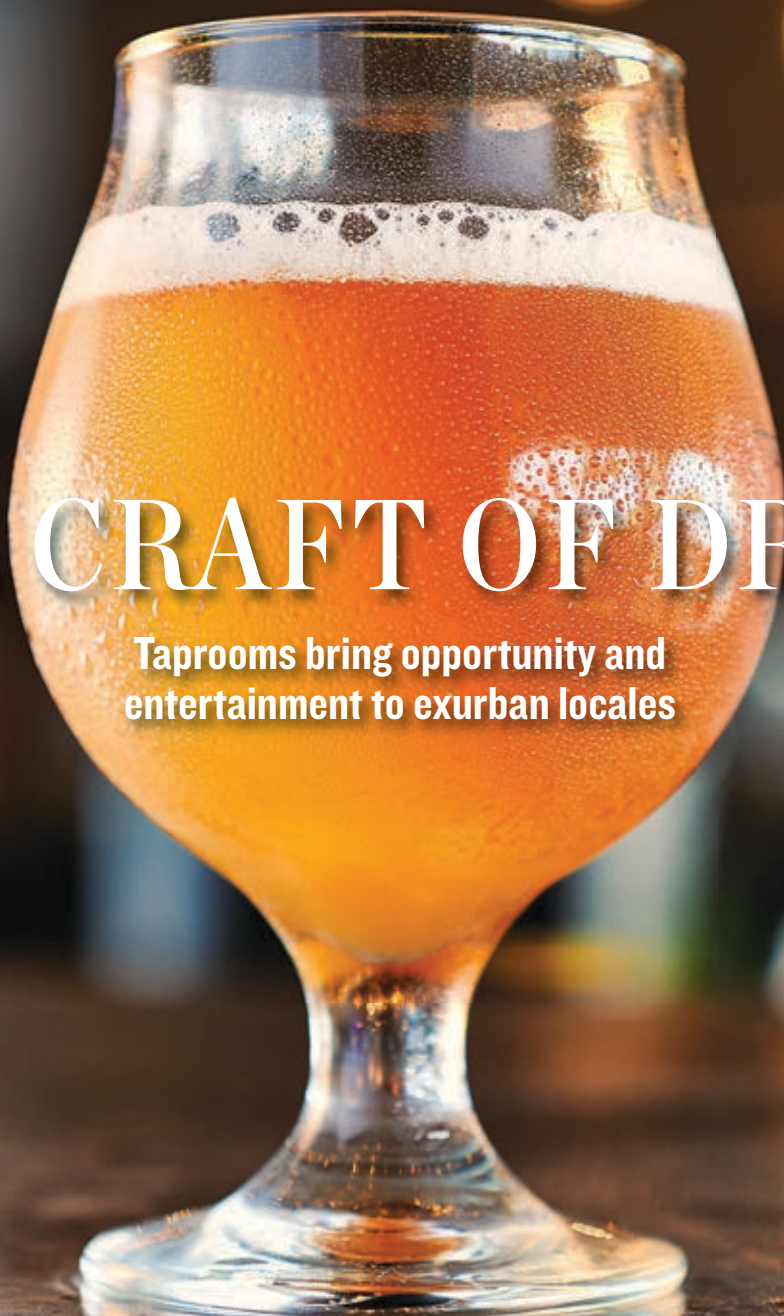


# TEXAS CO-OP POWER



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**BLUEBONNET NEWS**  
SEE PAGE 18





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Liz Cox pours a Mexican lager at Bandera Ale Project.

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**ON THE COVER** Nearly 300 craft breweries operate in Texas, representing a \$5.3 billion industry. Photo by Dave Shafer

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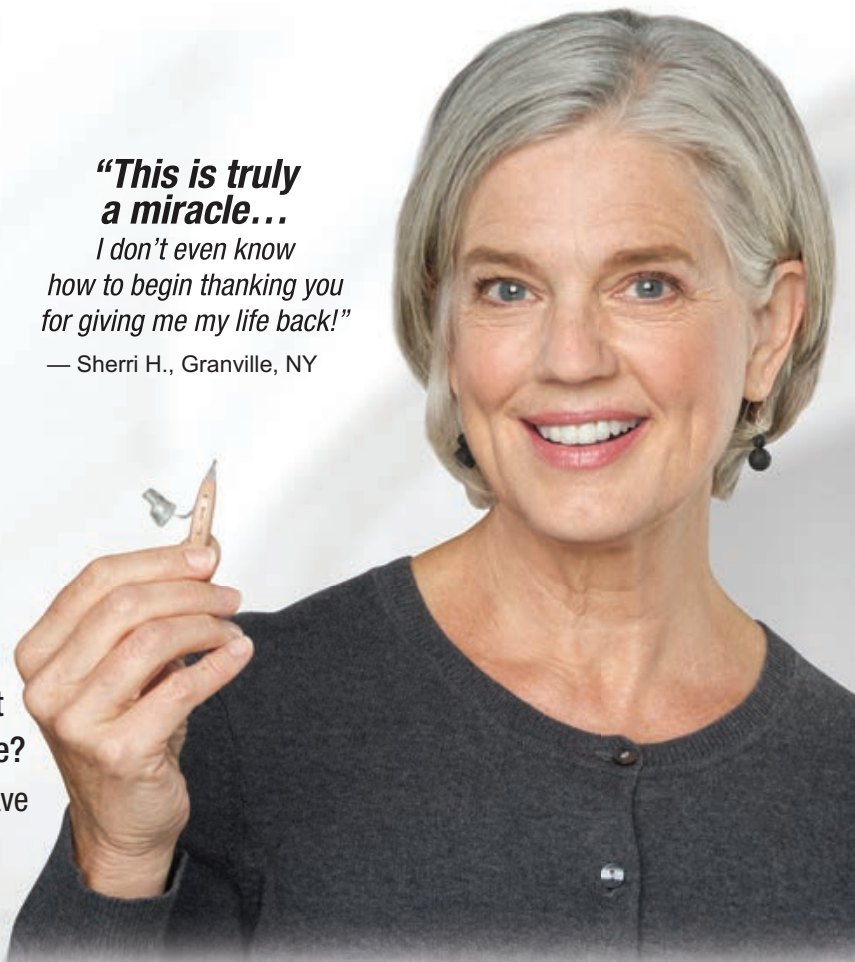
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— Sherri H., Granville, NY



## Can a Hearing Aid Delay or Prevent Alzheimer's and Dementia?

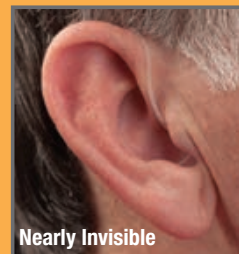
A study by the National Institute on Aging suggests older individuals with hearing loss are significantly more likely to develop Alzheimer's and dementia over time than those who retain their hearing. They suggest that an intervention — such as a hearing aid — could delay or prevent this by improving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

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## Not 10 and 2?

Great nostalgic writing [*Ranch Hands on the Wheel*, October 2019]. I can go further back when there were NO seatbelts and hands on steering wheel position was 3 and 9.

VIVIAN WILLIS | VIA FACEBOOK

## Honor Our Vets

*Wreaths Across America* [November 2018] prompted me to donate wreaths for this nationwide organization. This is a fantastic opportunity to honor our vets, and I will be donating again this year. I am hoping the follow-up article [*Leader of Kind Strangers*, November 2019] about Ellen Fuller, co-chair of this statewide effort in Texas, will encourage more people to donate.

JOYCE HISER | CRANDALL TRINITY VALLEY EC

## Stagecoach Secrets

I was once afforded access to areas off-limits to the general public, including the rooms and attic of the original Stagecoach Inn building [*Stopping by the Stagecoach*, November 2019]. That was neat enough, but the real treat was a hidden cave that was originally used for vegetable storage back in the 1800s. It was where Sam Bass hid out before leaving the next day for Round Rock, where he met his demise.

I treated myself to a scrumptious meal of fried catfish, which included the wonderful cornbread fingers that the inn is still famous for serving. Looks like a trip down Interstate 35 is in order.

BILL PEAKE | FRISCO COSERV

## Fair Is Fair

Not only did my dad teach me how to drive a standard pickup but also to change a flat tire before I took driver's ed [*Ranch Hands on the Wheel*, October 2019]. But when the high school instructor said only us girls had to change one, I stated I knew how and felt the boys should also. I wasn't giving in (it was a requisite to take the written test), so in the end all the boys had to also. Even my cousin was mad at me, but I felt fair was fair.

PAMELA JONES MAASS | VIA FACEBOOK



## Banner Day for Co-ops

Last year, I lost my husband, Bill Casey, and have been learning how to do so many things on my own. We had a strong windstorm last spring, and my flagpole got dislodged from its concrete mooring. Pedernales EC decided to take this on as a public service, and on October 8, workers came out in their trucks and reset and welded the flagpole back into position.

Before they left, we put up the Texas flag, and it was won-

derful to see it flying in front of the house again.

KAREN CASEY | CYPRESS MILL PEDERNALES EC

## Value of VFDs

My wife and I own our home and a 5-acre horse farm in rural Collin County. We also own a small cabin in Arkansas. Both houses are served by electric co-ops. Fire protection for both dwellings is provided by volunteer fire departments [*Putting Others First*, October 2019].

Each property owner in Arkansas served by a VFD is a member of the VFD and is assessed dues annually by state law. Payment of the dues is not mandatory, but if not paid by the member and a fire occurs, the member will be billed for the cost of responding to the fire.

I have contacted our state

representative about having a similar dues requirement in Texas for VFDs but have not seen or heard of any action being taken on this matter.

JAMES TRUEMPER | FARMERSVILLE FANNIN COUNTY EC

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## Dinner With the Arts

Since 1980, the Greater New Braunfels Arts Council has supported artists in New Braunfels and Comal County with events like last month's Caroling on the Plaza and annual Cinco de Mayo presentations in area schools. Another of the organization's signature events is Dinner With the Arts, which in recent years has become a fundraiser.

**DINNER WITH THE ARTS**, on **JANUARY 18** at the McKenna Events Center in **NEW BRAUNFELS**, will include a live band, visual arts, interactive exhibits and opportunities for patrons to sustain the organization through silent auctions, raffles and art sales.

Lisa Heymann, president of the council, says as many as 400 people attend the dinner each year in support of programs such as the Fall Into Art Festival and art and poetry contests.

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**WEB EXTRAS**  
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*“Courage, after all, is not being unafraid but doing what needs to be done in spite of fear.”*

— **JAMES L. FARMER JR.**, civil rights leader born January 12, 1920, in Marshall

## 2020 VISION



**2020 doesn't look exactly like some people predicted it would many years ago.**

**Prediction:** In 1967, *The Futurist*, then a newsletter, said humans would breed apes to be chauffeurs and perform other household chores.

**Reality:** Apes are struggling just to be apes. Close to 60% of the world's 504 primate species are threatened with extinction, and 75% of those species are in severe population decline, according to [earthday.org](http://earthday.org).

**Prediction:** In 2020, humans arrive on Mars. So said *Wired* magazine in 1997.

**Reality:** NASA says it hopes to send astronauts to Mars, which is an average of 140 million miles from Earth, in the 2030s.

**Prediction:** “There will be no C, X, or Q in our everyday alphabet. They will be abandoned because unnecessary.” That's what engineer John Elfreth Watkins Jr. wrote in *Ladies' Home Journal* in 1900.

**Reality:** An exciting idea but quite incorrect.



POWER OF OUR PEOPLE

## A Close-Knit Couple

**ALTHEA AND JOHN CONRADO**, Pedernales Electric Cooperative members since 1975, are in their seventh decade of marriage, have seven children and have together explored all seven continents. But Althea's luck seemed less certain in 1944, when the then 11-year-old raised the eyebrows and ire of a Red Cross worker.

The relief agency was at that time distributing yarn to volunteers to knit specialized gloves—with an open trigger finger—for Allied machine gunners overseas. Althea, who began knitting at age 5, wanted to contribute. But the aid worker she encountered pronounced her too young, to Althea's deep disappointment. A phone call from her mother to the agency sorted it, and she returned. "I can still see her face," Althea said. "She was so mad. And I came home with two big bags full of yarn!" She knitted the gloves, turned them in, then got some more yarn and kept knitting.

Though the product of Althea's knitting has today changed to blankets for Austin hospice patients, her pace hasn't slackened. She averages 1½ to two blankets

per week, each taking about 40 hours to make. Again last year, Althea was recognized by Travis County with a Spirit of Service Award, which honors volunteers for 2,000 hours of work—though she racks up more than 3,000 hours knitting annually.

John marvels at his wife's prolific output. "Some days it seems like they crank out of there faster, she's doing pink and next thing you know it's purple. What happened to the pink? It's purple!"

**POWER OF OUR PEOPLE** recognizes co-op members who improve their community's quality of life. Nominate someone by emailing [people@texascooppower.com](mailto:people@texascooppower.com).

## FINISH THIS SENTENCE

*I knew I was grown up when . . .*

**We think it will be fun** to show a little bit of our readers' personalities by asking you to finish a sentence that we start. As we collect your thoughts, we'll share them in the magazine and online.

**We tried this ourselves**, and here's what the writers and editors on our staff came up with:

**Chris Burrows:** ...I got socks for Christmas and was glad for it.

**Travis Hill:** ...my student loan servicer told me I'd be 60 before I paid off my debt.

**Jessica Ridge:** ...I couldn't move away from my college apartment without taking the heavily pregnant community cat with me.

**Tom Widlowski:** ...I bought my parents dinner for the first time.



► **Now it's your turn.**

How would you finish that sentence? Post your responses on the *Texas Co-op Power* Facebook page or email them to [letters@texas-ec.org](mailto:letters@texas-ec.org). Please include your city and co-op. We'll share what you send us.

MILESTONE BIRTHDAY

## Everybody Look What's Going Down

**For what it's worth**, musician Stephen Stills of Buffalo Springfield and Crosby, Stills & Nash turns 75 this month. He wrote three hit songs decades ago that can still get stuck in your head today: *For What It's Worth*, *Suite: Judy Blue Eyes* and *Love the One You're With*.

**He was born** January 3, 1945, in Dallas.



*Texas*  
= FEELS A =  
*Draft*



STORY BY MELISSA GASKILL  
PHOTOS BY DAVE SHAFER

# Craft Breweries

BRING ENTERTAINMENT AND ECONOMIC  
OPPORTUNITY TO COMMUNITIES

**O**n a sunny fall afternoon, large overhead fans supplement a light breeze blowing through open doors. Several couples perch at a long bar, dogs sprawled on the concrete floor nearby. People group around tables, deep into spirited board games. Out the back door, others dig into plates of barbecue at shaded picnic tables.

Bandera Ale Project is one of a new breed of community gathering spots. All around Texas, craft breweries have become destinations where folks bring the family and the dog, and play games or listen to music or comedy acts. The adults taste new flavors and types of beers, observe the brewing process and even meet the brewmaster.

Nearly 300 craft breweries now operate in Texas, representing a \$5.3 billion slice of the state's economy. Texas produces more craft beer than all but seven other states but ranks 46th in breweries per capita.

Josh Hare of Hops & Grain Brewing in Austin and chairman of the Texas Craft Brewers Guild board says several challenges have hampered the Texas industry. "When we opened Hops & Grain in 2011, it was not legal to operate a tasting room," he says. "The beer you poured had to be free." Brewers got around that by selling the glasses into which they poured beer. Then legislation passed in 2013 allowed brewers to sell beer on-site.

"From 2013 forward, we went from a dozen or so breweries to more than 70 just in Austin," Hare says.

The 2019 Legislature allowed manufacturing breweries to sell beer to go. Before that, Texas had been the only state that prohibited sales of six-packs or growlers (reusable bottles) for customers to take home. Other limits remain, though, in-

**Opposite: John Oliver, brewmaster at Bandera Ale Project. Above: After a day of preparing their hunting camp, Jezire and Brent Akin treat themselves to Bandera Ale Project beers.**



cluding how much product a brewery can distribute, Hare explains.

The Texas brewing industry comprises three tiers—manufacturing, distribution and retail—with specific rules for each. A manufacturing brewery that produces fewer than 225,000 barrels annually can operate a tasting room and sell on-site only. A brewpub, considered retail, can make and sell beer for

consumption on-site or off-site but only up to 10,000 barrels per year. Hops & Grain is about to reach that size, Hare says. "Do we give up the ability to sell beer to go in order to make more?"

Meanwhile, beer tourism has grown across the state, Hare points out, and that growth means more manufacturing jobs. "This is a manufacturing industry that employs a lot of folks," he says. "The retail components of craft breweries, from live entertainment to food trucks and tour groups, create additional jobs."

Bandera Ale Project, a member of Bandera Electric Cooperative, stages music every Saturday and prefers to hire local artists, says co-owner and brewmaster John Oliver. "We have music, comedy, open mic, karaoke. And we're family friendly," he says. "We cultivate that atmosphere; we're not your typical bar."

The brewery, about 50 miles northwest of San Antonio, offers free Wi-Fi, too, using Bandera EC's high-speed fiber internet. Communication specialist Samantha Gleason says BEC Fiber launched about the time the brewery opened. "Bandera Brewery added more of a community space to the area," she says. "And they contribute to support of local businesses, instead of buying from a bar that gets its product from outside the community."

Some craft breweries also play a role in revitalization efforts by restoring old, abandoned buildings. In downtown Lockhart, Caracara Brewing Company occupies a formerly empty historic building. In the North Texas town of Nocona, Nocona Beer & Brewery took over a former boot factory.



Craft brewing could bring jobs to the agriculture industry in Texas as well. Four basic ingredients go into making beer: hops, barley, water and yeast. Craft brewers use more hops than mass-produced beers, according to Neil Reid, the “beer professor” at the University of Toledo. For example, an imperial India pale ale style of beer uses 4 pounds of hops per keg, while a traditional pilsner uses less than half a pound. Small brewers also use hops to create unique flavors, while mass-produced beers focus on hop varieties that provide consistency of taste.

Even though most barley comes from outside Texas, Quentin Hart of the National Agricultural Statistics Service says that between 2012 and 2017, the number of acres of barley harvested in Texas increased nearly 93%.

**WEB EXTRAS**

► Read this story on our website to see a map of small-town craft breweries in Texas.

Barley used in beer is malted, which involves steeping the grain in water under controlled conditions, allowing it to sprout, then drying it.

Cory Artho is co-owner of Maverick Malt House, 20 miles west of Amarillo, one of several malting houses operating in the state. Price is his biggest challenge. Malt from Canada, which produces millions of tons, sells for 40 or 50 cents a pound. “We have a 5-ton

**Above: The old Nocona Boots factory is now home to Nocona Beer & Brewery. Right: Jody Jones serves conviviality by the pint at Nocona.**





*“We have music, comedy,  
open mic, karaoke.  
And we’re family-friendly.”*

**WE CULTIVATE THAT ATMOSPHERE;  
WE’RE NOT YOUR TYPICAL BAR.”**

machine, and if we ran it year-round, we might make 400,000 pounds,” he says. That smaller volume means Maverick must charge 80 cents a pound.

Still, the idea of local ingredients appeals to Texas brewers. Southerleigh Fine Food and Brewery in San Antonio makes the only all-Texas beer, Artho says. Texas Born and Bred, a pale ale, contains his barley, hops from Hank’s Hops in San Antonio, which grows the flowers hydroponically in a greenhouse, and yeast from Texas Yeast Lab in New Braunfels.

Beyond hops and barley, going local becomes easier. Oliver says that for its honey brown ale, Bandera Ale Project uses Doyle’s Honey, produced by Kent Doyle, a member of Medina Electric Cooperative. Its coffee porter uses coffee beans from Texas.

Jim and Carly Baroffio opened the Bandera brewery in November 2017, and Oliver joined shortly thereafter. “This location was the perfect place to put a brewery because we had access to the property behind for a beer garden,” Oliver says. “You couldn’t find a property big enough for the garden in San Antonio or even on Main Street in Bandera.”

Bandera Ale Project offers barbecue from Busbee’s Bar-B-Que on Main Street. “We wanted someone from Bandera, to make it like a small second location,” Oliver says. “They cook all the food at the main location and bring it here.”

All the fun aside, craft brewing is, bottom line, about the beer. Texas beers snapped up 29—including 11 gold—of the more than 400 medals awarded at the 2019 U.S. Open Beer Championship, where Fredericksburg’s Altstadt Brewery ranked as one of the top 10 breweries overall.

Bandera Ale Project attended its first competition, the Great American Beer Festival, in Denver in October. “Back when we started, we had just two beers on tap, a blonde ale and a honey brown ale, and sometimes we ran out of one because we only had one fermenter,” Oliver says. “After a few months, we got two more fermenters and had four beers on tap, then eight. We bought two more and now have 14 beers on tap. It’s been a learning process. People still come by just for those first two beers, though.”

That hard work has made beer a good reason for people to visit craft brewing establishments across the state. But certainly not the only one.

See more of Melissa Gaskill’s work at [melissagaskill.blogspot.com](http://melissagaskill.blogspot.com).

**From top: Bandera Ale Project’s beer garden. Dave Young, Nocona’s head brewer, keeps a watchful eye on his 6,100-gallon tanks. Cans await beer at Fredonia Brewery in Nacogdoches.**



BY SHERYL SMITH-RODGERS

# GORDON'S GOLD

ARCHITECT JAMES RIELY GORDON  
FLOURISHED DURING THE GOLDEN  
AGE OF TEXAS COURTHOUSES



**C**ramped and outdated, the 1892 Victoria County Courthouse faced demolition in 1961 to make way for a new building in downtown Victoria. When historical preservationists got wind of the plan, they rallied support and presented a 13-foot-long petition to county commissioners. Unfurling the scroll, they read aloud the names of 661 county residents who wanted the courthouse's exterior to remain intact. Following this citizens' directive, commissioners voted to make no outside changes to the three-story edifice, adorned with turrets, arched windows and a clock tower.

Today, the former Victoria County Courthouse houses county offices and stands among 12 surviving Texas courthouses designed

and built by James Riely Gordon. From 1889 to 1902, the prolific architect designed 18 "temples of justice"—plus commercial, religious, residential and other civic buildings—across the state.

Ranked among Gordon's outstanding work is the Ellis County Courthouse, heralded as a "masterpiece" by author James Michener. In his 1985 historical novel *Texas*, Michener likens the pink-and-gray granite building in Waxahachie to a "... fairy-tale palace 10 stories high, replete with battlements and turrets and spires and soaring clock towers and miniature castles high in the air. It was a bejeweled treasure,

**Clockwise from above: The Ellis County Courthouse in Waxahachie and exterior details; the Gonzales County Courthouse in Gonzales; architect James Riely Gordon.**

ELLIS AND GONZALES COURTHOUSES: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



**ASIDE FROM THEIR RESPLENDENT FACADES, GORDON'S COURTHOUSES HAD ANOTHER MAJOR SELLING POINT: IN BROILING SUMMER MONTHS, THEY FELT COOLER INSIDE.**



structures that he adapted to the specific needs of anyone he could interest,” writes Chris Meister in *James Riely Gordon: His Courthouses and Other Public Architecture*. “A study of the architect’s known work finds most of his early structures in communities along rail lines connecting with San Antonio.”

Gordon’s start as an architect couldn’t have had better timing. In 1881, the 17th Texas Legislature passed a bill that allowed counties to borrow funds to build public buildings. The earliest courthouses in Texas were tents, dugouts or simple log structures, according to *The Courthouses of Texas*, by Mavis P. Kelsey Sr. and Donald H. Dyal. Because these primitive affairs were often unsafe, the 1881 bill empowered county commissioners to build spacious, fireproof buildings that inspired awe and attracted commerce.

The golden age of grandiose Texas courthouses had begun.

In those days, counties often staged competitions to attract designs for courthouse projects. In 1888, Gordon entered an Aransas County contest in Rockport. His exotic Moorish concept, graced with horseshoe arches and onion domes, stood out among plans submitted by other architects, including the esteemed Alfred Giles and Otto Kramer. Gordon’s first courthouse served citizens for 65 years before it was torn down.

For the next decade, Gordon embraced an architectural trend called Richardsonian Romanesque. The massive, masonry style—developed by Boston architect Henry Hobson Richardson—features short columns; wide, rounded arches; conical or pyramidal towers; and sculpted ornaments. Gordon melded those elements to create customized courthouses for Fayette, Bexar, Erath and Victoria counties.

Gordon’s professional reputation soared in 1893, when his Texas State Building wowed visitors at the World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. One newspaper writer proclaimed the building as “one of the most attractive at the Fair,” and it would

yet it was also a sturdy, massive court of judgments, one of the finest buildings in Texas.”

Born August 2, 1863, in Winchester, Virginia, Gordon moved with his mother and civil engineer father to San Antonio in the early 1870s. He joined the civil engineer corps of the International-Great Northern Railroad at age 14. In 1881, Gordon worked under architect William K. Dobson and then as a draftsman with J.N. Preston & Son. In late 1884, he opened his own San Antonio office with established architect Frederick Shelton. In the coming years, Gordon would go in and out of partnerships and would also run an office in Dallas.

Gordon traveled the state by train and buggy in search of clients. “On these trips, he carried generic plans for a variety of



**WEB EXTRAS**

► Read this story on our website to see vintage postcards of Gordon's Texas courthouses.

become the most widely publicized design of Gordon's lifetime. By fall 1896, the fair's buildings had been razed or burned.

Aside from their resplendent facades, Gordon's courthouses had another major selling point: In broiling summer months, they felt cooler inside. To maximize comfort, the architect created a cross-shaped layout with a center atrium, a combined shaft and tower, and corner entrance porches. The plan, which Gordon copyrighted and improved with subsequent projects, worked like a chimney, drawing cool air from the porches while venting hot air upward through the tower. Eleven courthouses followed Gordon's "Signature Plan," according to a list in Meister's book.

After the 1893 fair, Gordon continued his work in Texas, designing 13 more courthouses. Brazoria (demolished), Hopkins, Gon-

**Clockwise from left: The McLennan County Courthouse dome in Waco and window detail; an archive photo of the Bexar County Courthouse in San Antonio.**

zales, San Patricio (demolished), Ellis, Van Zandt (demolished), Wise, Comal and Lee reflect his Richardsonian Romanesque style. With Harrison (now a museum), McLennan and Angelina (demolished), Gordon transitioned to the Beau-

Arts style that uses grand entrances and towering pillars. A low budget kept Callahan (demolished) sparse in architectural detail.

In June 1902, Gordon moved his practice and family to New York. Shortly before his 1937 death, he designed a building for the 1939 New York World's Fair. The honor ended the 53-year career of the architect who signed his work J. Riely Gordon and got his start in Texas.

**Sheryl Smith-Rodgers** of Blanco blogs about her gardening adventures at [sherylsmithroddgers.blogspot.com](http://sherylsmithroddgers.blogspot.com).

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■ Williamson County's current courthouse in Georgetown — its fifth one — was built in 1911 in the Beaux Arts style, with arched windows and French Neoclassical adornments. Visitors can climb the impressive spiral staircase with marble wainscoting. Tours are given most Friday and Saturday afternoons. One of the courthouse's most infamous cases, in the early 1920s, involved the first successful prosecution and jailing of several members of the Ku Klux Klan. Today, the county's criminal courts are in a separate facility.

# STANDING PROUD

■ Lee County's courthouse in Giddings is its second one. It was built in 1899 for \$32,270, replacing the original courthouse, which burned two years earlier. The building is designed in the Richardson Romanesque style, named after Henry Hobson Richardson, a prominent American architect who mixed classic French, Spanish and Italian elements. Limestone arches and a striking red brick exterior lend grandeur to the building. The interior showcases a rotunda and marble tile, and the courtroom features expanses of woodwork and a metal ceiling. Of note: The bell tower is the highest point in Lee County.



## A look at the 14 courthouses that grace the Bluebonnet region

Story by Patrick Beach

Photos by Sarah Beal

They are the hub of public life in our county seats, the buildings where residents engage in the mundane paying of taxes, the joy of getting married and the very serious pursuit of justice. Everything from land disputes to murder trials unfold within the courthouses of the 14 counties where Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative provides most or some of the electricity.

Many of the courthouses are ornate, architectural beauties that date to the 1800s, usually towering over a town square. The newest was built in the 1960s.

Texas has 254 counties but has a few more courthouses than that because some counties now have more than one courthouse to handle growing demands. More than 240 of them are historic buildings still in use. Eighty were built before 1900. The Texas Historic Courthouse Preservation Program, administered by the Texas Historical Commission, has provided millions of dollars in grants to restore some of these treasures. Nearly 140 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Fire took a toll on more than 100 original courthouses in Texas. Wood-frame construction, open fireplaces, faulty wiring, lighting, under-equipped volunteer fire departments and a handful of arson cases were to blame. The limestone, granite and marble used to rebuild grand courthouses in the late 1800s were more fire-resistant.

Texas' oldest courthouse, dating to 1861, is in Cass County in East Texas, and the newest likely will be that of Aransas County in Rockport, which should be rebuilt by 2021 after severe damage from Hurricane Harvey in 2017.

From the stately Greek, Renaissance and Romanesque Revival architecture of the late 1800s to the Classical Revival and Art Deco of the early 1900s, Bluebonnet-area courthouses remain majestic. ■



Milam County's fifth — and current — courthouse in Cameron was built in 1892 and underwent a lavish renovation in the 2000s. It is a classic example of the Renaissance Revival style of architecture, with Corinthian columns towering above the entryway. A replica of the statue that symbolizes justice was mounted atop a clock tower in 1895, but the tower and statue were removed in the late 1930s due to safety concerns. A new tower and statue were added during the recent restoration. The adjacent old jail is now the Milam County Historical Museum.



■ Bastrop County's first courthouse was built in 1832, but it burned. Today's building, above, is Bastrop's third courthouse, built in 1883. Originally, it was a classic example of the Renaissance Revival architectural style. It was designed by F.E. Ruffini and Jasper Preston, who also planned and built the historic Driskill Hotel in Austin. Next door, the old county jail, built in 1891, is a striking Victorian-style building with tan and contrasting red brick window arches. It housed criminals until 1974.

■ At right, Colorado County's courthouse in Columbus, completed in 1891, is another Renaissance Revival-style building, its overhanging eaves inspired by 16th century Italian design. It suffered tornado damage in 1909, losing its original clock tower and part of the roof. A copper dome replaced the tower, and a large clock is there now.





■ The Caldwell County Courthouse, at left, has appeared in movies and TV shows. Widely regarded as one of the finest courthouses in Central Texas, this ornate 1894 Second Empire-style structure dominates Lockhart's historic district. Unlike many courthouses in the area, the interior remains largely as it was when originally built, down to the elaborate hand-carved features on the wood staircase posts.

■ Gonzales County's first Greek Revival-style courthouse burned in 1893 and was replaced three years later with the Romanesque Revival structure that remains today in Gonzales, below. The 'Come and Take It' present-day floor mat highlights a defining piece of Texas history — a small, bronze cannon previously given to Texas troops by Mexico. At the Battle of Gonzales, in 1835, Texans created a flag bearing a black star, a cannon and the challenge 'Come and Take It,' a saying that lives on in Texas.





■ Guadalupe County's fourth — and current — courthouse, above, with its clean Art Deco and Moderne lines and limestone facade, was completed in 1935 in Seguin. It replaced an 1889 structure built in the Italianate style. Carved into the limestone above the building's entrance are the figures of Justice and Wisdom. A striking eagle sculpture sits atop the county's veterans memorial, which is surrounded by 2,100 paver stones bearing the names of members of the military from Guadalupe County.



■ The atrium of the Fayette County Courthouse in La Grange, above center, was open to the sky when it was first built. Today it has a glass ceiling. Romanesque Revival through and through, Fayette County's fourth — and current — courthouse dates to 1891 and has undergone periodic renovations since the 1970s. The style harkens back to medieval Europe. It has rounded arches and a checkerboard exterior made of limestone and blue and red Pecos sandstone. High above the main entrance is a tall clock tower.



■ Art Deco style defines Washington County's fourth — and current — courthouse in Brenham, above, with clean limestone lines on its exterior and geometric detailing characteristic of the New Deal's Works Progress Administration, which funded the construction.



■ Hays County's courthouse in San Marcos, above right, is its fourth, built in 1908 in a predominantly Renaissance Revival style. The fountain near the east entrance was added in 1907, complete with a trough for dogs to quench their thirst. The courthouse appeared in the 2014 Oscar-winning film 'Boyhood.'

■ Travis County's busy six-story civil courthouse, bottom right, is in the heart of downtown Austin. The current building was completed in 1931. Its impressive use of limestone and ornamentation inside and out make it a standout example of Art Deco, or Art Moderne, an architectural style popular during the Great Depression.





■ Austin County's concrete Moderne courthouse in Bellville, above right, dates to 1960. It is the county's fifth courthouse. Its predecessor, built in 1888, was known as the 'majestic' courthouse and had a colorful past. A cornerstone contained a time capsule, which was opened in 1960. The contents were a disappointment because most of the paper items inside had rotted away. Today's Austin County courthouse has its own time capsule, added when it was built.



■ Burleson County's fourth — and current — courthouse, below, in Caldwell, was finished in 1927, replacing an 1890 structure. Architect J.M. Glover built the square courthouse in the Classical Revival architectural style, which played off the look of ancient Greek temples. Windows vary in shape from square to arched to rectangular. Outside, a large memorial bears the names of the county's veterans who died fighting for their country in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War.



## Bluebonnet, LCRA grants support park, renovations, fire department

The Lower Colorado River Authority and Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative provided several grants in Bluebonnet's service area recently. The grants are part of LCRA's Community Development Partnership Program to give back to the communities it serves. Bluebonnet is one of LCRA's wholesale electric customers and a partner in the grant program. Applications for the next round of grants will be accepted Jan. 1-31, 2020. More information is available at [lcra.org/cdpp](http://lcra.org/cdpp).

LCRA and Bluebonnet representatives, top right, present a \$25,000 grant to the Carmine Economic Development Corp. in Fayette County for improvements to Muehlbrad-Albers City Park. Pictured, from left to right, are Byron Balke, Bluebonnet Board assistant secretary/treasurer; Kate Holman, LCRA regional affairs representative; Mark Johnson, Bluebonnet community development representative; Robert 'Bob' Springer, Carmine EDC former board member; Lori A. Berger, LCRA board member; Kelli Sanford, Carmine EDC board member; Susan Bathe, Carmine EDC president; Kyle Merten, Bluebonnet community development representative; and Vicki LaRue, Carmine EDC secretary.



LCRA and Bluebonnet representatives present a \$19,095 grant to American Legion Post 602 Shelby in Fayetteville, center right, for building renovations. Pictured, front row, left to right, are Kate Holman, LCRA regional affairs representative; Bryon Balke, Bluebonnet Board assistant secretary/treasurer; Lori A. Berger, LCRA board member; and Robert 'Bobby' Rinn, Austin County commissioner. Middle row, left to right: Paul Burnside, Post 602 finance officer; Tom Rabb, Post 602 adjutant; Jerry Kubala, Post 602 commander; John Dennis, Post 602 member; and Kyle Merten, Bluebonnet community development representative. Back row, left to right: Post 602 members Gene Sera, Steve Pavlicek, Lebert Brune and Milton Heintschel.



LCRA and Bluebonnet representatives present a \$14,765 grant to the Heart of the Pines Volunteer Fire Department, bottom right, for an off-road utility vehicle with fire-suppression equipment. Pictured, front row, left to right, are Adrian Sepulveda, Heart of the Pines VFD captain; Rick Arnic, LCRA regional affairs representative; Roderick Emanuel, Bluebonnet Board vice chairman; Lori A. Berger, LCRA board member; Mizzy Hedge, VFD chief; and Deborah Rogers, Bluebonnet community development representative. Back row: Travis Ward, firefighter; Josh Lucas, VFD lieutenant; and Bryan Bracewell, Bluebonnet Board member.



LCRA photos





Sarah Beal photo

## Bluebonnet hits renewable energy milestone

Bluebonnet celebrated several milestones in 2019. In addition to its 80th anniversary and surpassing 100,000 meters and 10,000 followers on Facebook, the cooperative added its 1,000th renewable energy member in November. Pandiyan Kaliyamoorthy of Austin, center, received a cooler full of goodies, including a solar-powered portable battery pack, from Bluebonnet's Brittany Hardy, a member service representative, and Wesley Brinkmeyer, manager of energy services. Another milestone this year: The capacity of Bluebonnet members' renewable power is expected to exceed 10 megawatts early this year.

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### BOARD MEETING

Bluebonnet's Board of Directors will meet at 9 a.m. Jan. 21 at Bluebonnet's Headquarters, 155 Electric Ave., Bastrop.

### MAGAZINE QUESTIONS?

Contact Lisa Ogle at **512-332-7968** or email [lisa.ogle@bluebonnet.coop](mailto:lisa.ogle@bluebonnet.coop).

### OFFICE CLOSINGS

Bluebonnet offices will be closed Jan. 1 for New Year's Day, Jan. 20 for Martin Luther King Jr. Day and Jan. 23 for a company meeting.

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# Ghost Dogs of Orozimbo

The tale of a trio of dogs ‘guarding’ Santa Anna continues long past turning point in history

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

OROZIMBO PLANTATION, A SPRAWLING cotton farm in west central Brazoria County, was home to Dr. James Aeneas Phelps and his wife, who both arrived in Texas with Stephen F. Austin’s original colonists in 1822. In 1836, their mansion would serve as a prison for Antonio López de Santa Anna.

Phelps had served as a surgeon for the Texian Army at San Jacinto and observed the capture of Santa Anna, whose ruthless executions of Texians at the Alamo and Goliad prompted demands for the Mexican general’s death. But Sam Houston recognized that the notorious prisoner was worth more to Texas alive, so Santa Anna was taken to Orozimbo, where Phelps managed his care after an attempted suicide.

One wintry night, an officer of the Mexican military organized a group of riders to free Santa Anna. Everyone at the plantation was asleep, except the general, who had ostensibly received word of the plan. Just before dawn, as the riders approached the plantation, a frantic baying of hounds disrupted the early morning silence and roused the guards. The riders withdrew, abandoning the rescue.

But Orozimbo Plantation kept no dogs, and for miles around, there were no neighbors who had dogs. A servant had purportedly seen the creatures and described them as strange, wild-looking animals with frightening eyes. There were three of them, all a dingy white. Two had shaggy coats and one appeared hairless.

Months later, a passing traveler was



told the description of the canines and claimed that the dogs had been the much-loved companions of a man who lived near Washington-on-the-Brazos. When the dogs’ owner left to join the fight for independence, his dogs refused to eat or return to the house. When the animals disappeared, neighbors told the story that they were looking for their master, who had been killed at Goliad.

For the next decade, settlers occasionally spotted the dogs in the forest near Orozimbo. Except for the night of Santa Anna’s attempted escape, they were always silent. The legend of the ghost dogs and their desperate search for their master added an aura of mystery to the story of Santa Anna’s imprisonment.

Residents of West Columbia caught

glimpses of the dogs as they wandered silently in the woods near Orozimbo. Three ghostly dogs fitting the same description reportedly were seen by a man and his wife as recently as 1974 near the cemetery and ancient oak tree that are the last remnants of the fabled plantation.

Nearly 150 years after the event, Catherine Munson Foster wrote of the canine apparitions in the spring 1984 edition of *Texas Heritage* magazine. “There are those who believe, or say they believe, that the ghost dogs of Orozimbo are the same animals still standing guard, alert to give the alarm should the specter of a long-dead Santa Anna make another attempt to escape.”

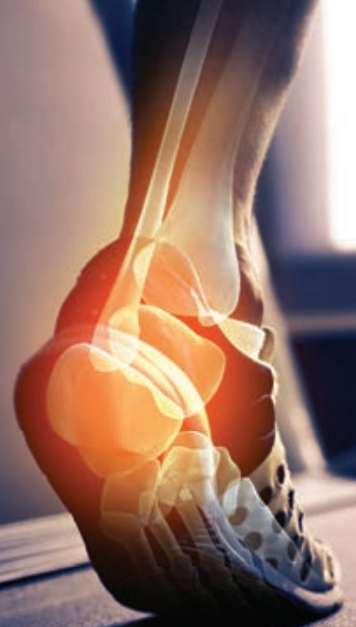
Read more of Martha Deeringer’s writing at [marthadeeringer.com](http://marthadeeringer.com).

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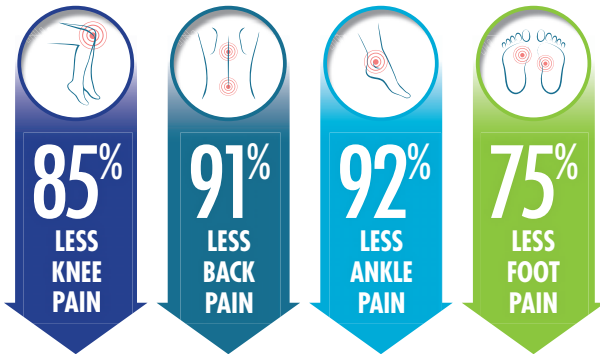
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## New Year's Resolution

A NEW YEAR BRINGS PROMISES FROM most of our lips to make healthier choices. Food is an obvious place to start, and it can be an easy place, too, if you make just a few small changes. One of those can be simply adding more fresh vegetables to every meal.

Megan Myers, a Texas foodie who will take over as *Texas Co-op Power* food editor next month, writes Stetted (stetted.com), a food blog. "I focus on fresh ingredients and uncomplicated flavors, with spins that keep mealtime interesting," Myers says. "Real food is possible, even for busy moms like me."

For her, learning to cook healthier meals "was the evolution of figuring out the best flavors from the ingredients we have here in Texas. I also want to make sure my kids are experiencing a wide range of foods, and cooking healthier at home helps balance out those post-soccer and party meals."

Myers' Roasted Sweet Potato Salad With Chickpeas and Kale, served warm, makes a light, healthy meal or a flavorful side for a lean protein. Her Spicy Glazed Brussels Sprouts are another great way to add more fresh winter vegetables to your diet.

SHANNON OELRICH, FOOD EDITOR

### Roasted Sweet Potato Salad With Chickpeas and Kale

- 2 medium sweet potatoes, diced
- 2 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon olive oil, divided use
- ¼ teaspoon salt, divided use
- ⅛ teaspoon paprika
- 1 can (15 ounces) chickpeas
- 2 cups packed torn kale
- 2 tablespoons minced red onion
- 2 teaspoons Champagne vinegar or white wine vinegar

CONTINUED ON PAGE 32



MEGAN MYERS

# Recipes

## New Year's Resolutions



### THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

HALEY FEUERBACHER | COSERV

Spiralized noodles have been all the rage lately. If you haven't tried them, you can use this month's winning recipe as a great starting point. If you already use them, you can add this recipe to your repertoire. Easy and quick, this veggie noodle bowl is great for a healthy weeknight meal and especially satisfying when topped with your choice of protein.

### Quick & Healthy Garlic-Parmesan Veggie Noodle Bowl

- 2 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
- 1 white onion, diced
- 2 packages (10.7 ounces each) spiralized butternut squash noodles
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1-2 teaspoons salt, divided use
- 1½-2 cups chopped kale
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1. In an extra-large nonstick pan or wok, heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Cook the diced onion in oil until it starts to brown.
2. Add noodles, garlic, ½ teaspoon salt

and remainder of olive oil. Cook, stirring occasionally, for approximately 6 minutes or until noodles are thoroughly cooked. The texture should be soft with some crispy browned noodles.

3. In the last 2-3 minutes of cooking, add kale, basil and another ½ teaspoon salt, stirring thoroughly for even cooking. Taste for seasoning and add more salt if desired.

4. Once the noodles are thoroughly sautéed, remove pan from heat and stir in Parmesan.

► Serves 4.

**COOK'S TIP** You can make your own butternut squash noodles by using a spiralizer.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 31

- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon coarse mustard
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Toss diced sweet potatoes in 1 teaspoon olive oil, then spread on a rimmed baking sheet. Sprinkle with ¼ teaspoon salt and paprika. Roast 18 minutes, stirring halfway through.
3. Meanwhile, pour chickpeas into a colander over the sink and let drain. Put the kale into a large bowl and set aside.
4. In a small saucepan, combine red onion, vinegar, lemon juice, mustard, honey, black pepper and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt, and heat over low. Once warmed, slowly whisk in remaining olive oil until dressing is emulsified. Keep over very low heat until potatoes are done.
5. Pour cooked potatoes on top of kale, then add drained chickpeas. Whisk dressing one more time, then pour over the chickpeas.
6. Stir salad to coat evenly, taking care to not mash the potatoes. Serve once the kale has softened a bit. ► Serves 2-4.

### Spicy Glazed Brussels Sprouts

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons gochujang (red chile paste)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Trim ends from Brussels sprouts and halve or quarter.
  2. Toss Brussels sprouts with olive oil and spread on a baking sheet. Roast 20 minutes, stirring halfway through.
  3. In a small bowl, whisk together gochujang, honey and soy sauce. Pour over roasted sprouts and stir to coat. Return pan to the oven 5 more minutes, until sauce is sticky and caramelized.
- Serves 4.

**COOK'S TIP** You can find gochujang in the Asian foods section of most grocery stores, and it can be easily ordered online.



IF YOUR RECIPE IS FEATURED,  
YOU'LL WIN A TCP APRON!

### \$100 Recipe Contest

June's recipe contest topic is **Texas Wine Harvest**. Send us your best pairings or dishes cooked with wine. The deadline is **January 10**.

ENTER ONLINE at [TexasCoopPower.com/contests](http://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.



## My Favorite Carrot Soup

MOIRA CAHILL | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 3 pounds carrots, peeled and chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 7 cups chicken or vegetable stock, divided use
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Greek yogurt (optional)

1. Heat olive oil in a stockpot over medium heat. Add onion and cook until soft. Add carrots and cook another 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook 1 minute.
  2. Add 6 cups of stock and the thyme, salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer 20 minutes or until carrots are soft.
  3. Purée the soup in a blender. Add additional stock for desired consistency. Simmer an additional 30 minutes. Serve hot with a dollop of Greek yogurt.
- Serves 8-10.



## Top Tips for a Healthy New Year

Resolve to make small changes, which are easier to maintain than sweeping changes. For example, if you're not already a runner, don't sign up for a marathon, but do resolve to go for a walk three times a week.

It's easier to add things than take them away. Want to make your diet healthier? Resolve to have at least two types of vegetables at lunch and dinner.

Reward yourself for progress. If you get to the end of January and have kept

your resolution 90% of the time, make your reward something related to it. Healthier diet? Get yourself a cool new piece of cooking equipment. Went on more walks? Buy new athletic shoes.

Don't beat yourself up if you stumble. If you break your resolution, try to start it again as soon as you can. If you slip up on a weekend, start again on Monday. If your blunder is midweek, use the weekend as your reset.

SHANNON OELRICH

## TEXAS COOP POWER

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# Fences

WHETHER YOU'RE BUSY SWINGING for the fences or mending them, one thing's for sure—the grass is greener on the Texas side. **GRACE FULTZ**

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

◀ **JESSIKA MORRIS**, Navasota Valley EC: "This photo was captured while my daughter Dixie was leaning over a barbed wire fence so that she could get to know one of the newest horses on the farm."

▼ **TRAVIS LACOSS**, Pedernales EC: The Rita Blanca National Grasslands in the Panhandle.



▼ **ASHLEY ZIMMERMAN**, Trinity Valley EC: "I go for many walks on our property and I always take my camera. This bobcat came out to pose for me one lucky afternoon."

▶ **TERRI CARTER**, Rita Blanca EC: "The sunrise colors are really multiplied by the ice that coated this fence. It melted some and slid down a bit, then it froze again."



◀ **RICK ROBERSON**, United Cooperative Services: "The setting summer sun in Big Bend casts its warm glow on this old gate that, in spite of some hard knocks, is still getting the job done."

## UPCOMING CONTESTS

MAY FAIRS AND CARNIVALS	DUE JANUARY 10
JUNE STATE PARKS	DUE FEBRUARY 10
JULY EXPLORATION	DUE MARCH 10

Enter online at [TexasCoopPower.com/Contests](https://TexasCoopPower.com/Contests).



## Pick of the Month Hill Country Gem & Mineral Show

**Fredericksburg** January 18-19  
(325) 248-1067, fredericksburgrockhounds.org

This annual show by the Fredericksburg Rockhounds, at Lady Bird Johnson Municipal Park, features dealers, demonstrations, rock cutting and activities for children. The Rockhounds' monthly meetings include rock swaps and field trips for rock hunting and to museums.

## January 11

**Kerrville** Out of This World: Music of the Cosmos, (830) 792-7469, symphonyofthehills.org

**San Angelo** Family Day Mystery at the Museum, (325) 653-3333, samfa.org

## 16

**Corsicana** Reflections of Patsy Cline, (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

**Tyler** An Evening With Rita Moreno, Legend of Stage and Screen; (903) 566-7424; cowancenter.org

## 17

**Lubbock** [17-18] Symphony Masterworks Series: Grieg's Beloved Piano Concerto, (806) 762-1688, visitlubbock.org

## 18

**Brenham** Uptown Swirl in Downtown Brenham, (979) 337-7582, downtownbrenham.com

**Luckenbach** Blues Festival, (830) 997-3224, luckenbachtexas.com

**Surfside Beach Dunes Day**, (979) 864-1152, brazosport.org

## 21

**Lufkin** Ladysmith Black Mambazo, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

## 23

**Richardson** Todd Mosby and the New Horizons Ensemble, (972) 744-4650, eisemanncenter.com



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## 24

**Marshall** Farewell Angelina,  
(903) 934-7992, memorialcityhall.com

**Jefferson** [24-25] Quilt Show,  
(903) 935-2235, jeffersonquiltshow.com

**New Braunfels** [24-25] Patty Griffin,  
(830) 606-1281, gruenehall.thundertix.com

## 25

**Bandera** Grace Lutheran Church  
Wild Game Dinner, (830) 796-3091,  
gracebandera.weebly.com

**Edna** Brackenridge Winter Carnival  
and Snow Day, (361) 782-5456,  
brackenridgepark.com

**Fredericksburg** Hill Country Indian  
Artifact Show, (830) 626-5561,  
hillcountryindianartifacts.com

**Ozona** Permian Basin Square and  
Round Dance Association Winterfest,  
(432) 685-3266, squaredancetx.com

## 30

**Boerne** Voctave, (830) 331-9079,  
boerneperformingarts.com

**Galveston** *We the People*, 1-800-821-1894,  
thegrand.com



January 25  
Edna  
Brackenridge Winter  
Carnival and Snow Day

## 31

**Canton** [31-Feb. 2] Battle on the Mountain,  
(318) 455-4489, facebook.com/9thtexas canton

# February

## 1

**Crockett** Asleep at the Wheel,  
(936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

**San Antonio** Asian Festival,  
(210) 458-2224, texancultures.com

## 4

**College Station** Steep Canyon Rangers,  
(979) 845-1234, mscopas.org

## 5

**Laredo** [5-8] Birding Festival,  
(956) 718-1063, laredobirdingfestival.org

## 7

**Grand Prairie** [7-9] *Trolls Live!*,  
(972) 854-5050, theatregp.com

**Ennis** [7-8, 14-15, 21-23] *Forever*,  
(972) 878-5126, theatre rocks.com

## Submit Your Event!

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

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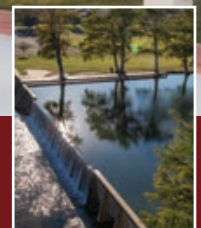
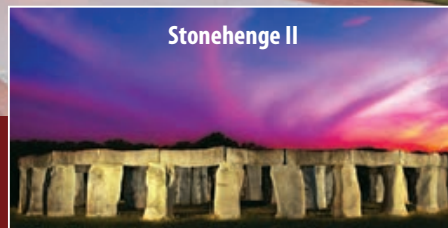
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# Must See Sequel

Hill Country Arts Foundation makes Ingram's Stonehenge II accessible

I'VE FOUND THAT THE SEQUEL IS RARELY better than the original. Movies like *Jaws: The Revenge* support this conclusion. But sometimes a second act surpasses the first, and this happened when two Texans used a truckload of plaster to construct Stonehenge II, a monument that's better than the original because it's here in Texas.

On a sweltering summer day, I tripped out to the Texas Hill Country, 5 miles west of Kerrville, to visit Ingram. Most visitors come to splash in the Guadalupe River or to relax on its cypress-lined banks. But I was on a mission to see a Texas version of one of the world's iconic stone structures.

The original Stonehenge, in Wiltshire, England, was built around 2500 B.C. It fascinates Americans, and there are two dozen Stonehenge replicas in the United States. I wanted to know what separates Stonehenge II from the rest.

I followed the Guadalupe and arrived at the Hill Country Arts Foundation. There, in a crunchy field of dry grass, stood 30 interlocking arches encircling five free-standing ones. All were between 8 and 12 feet tall.

My first question was "Why in the world is this here?" The answer begins with Al Shepperd, who received a large limestone slab from his buddy Doug Hill. Rather than use the stone as landscaping, Shepperd dug a hole and stood the slab upright as a monolith. Every day



**Chet checks out Stonehenge II in Ingram.**

he looked at it and thought, "Wow, that looks like Stonehenge."

Hill agreed, and soon they constructed the first arch out of plaster and chicken wire. It looked so good that they didn't want to stop. Within a few years, the men had built Stonehenge II, and visitors came from all over the world. The hit TV show *Friday Night Lights* even filmed an episode on-site.

Standing near the arches, I was amazed by how much work went into building these incredible structures. Even though it's only 90% as wide as the original Stonehenge and 60% as tall, all the arches are intact. And unlike the original Stonehenge, there are no barriers restricting access. Anyone can walk among the behemoth "stones" and imagine the real Stonehenge when its builders established it millennia ago.

Stonehenge II was originally constructed on Shepperd's property in Hunt. After his death, the family decided to sell the property and feared that the new owners might not appreciate this quirky art.

The Hill Country Arts Foundation purchased the entire installation and moved it to its present location on the river. To make the site even more curious, it also moved Shepperd's replicas of the Easter Island stone heads, which now stand like guardians protecting Stonehenge II.

Stonehenge I and II remain shrouded in mystery. With England's Stonehenge, we wonder how and why the ancient people built it. With Ingram's Stonehenge II, we know the how but could still spend hours pondering why a couple of buddies would dedicate endless hours toward this project.

It may seem complicated, but for those of us who've spent enough time in Texas, we know the reason. It's simply the Texas heat, which can make our brains do some mighty crazy things. And that's enough explanation for me.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

 **WEB EXTRAS** ▶ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of his visit to Stonehenge II in Ingram.

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