

UNEARTHING ARTIFACTS
IN WEST TEXAS

JUNETEENTH'S LONG PATH
ACROSS AMERICA

STAUNCH COMPETITOR
FINALLY WEARS OUT

Texas Coop Power

FOR BLUEBONNET EC MEMBERS

JUNE 2023

Comfort Food

New food editor
Vianney Rodriguez
opens her kitchen
to TCP readers

**BLUEBONNET
EC NEWS**

SEE PAGE 16



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June 2023



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Scratching the Surface

West Texas ranchers team up with researchers to unearth pieces of history.

*By Eileen Mattei
Photos by Dave Shafer*

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A Pulitzer Prize-winning historian describes the holiday's long path out of her home state.

*Excerpt by Annette Gordon-Reed
Illustration by John Jay Cabuay*

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ON THE COVER

New food editor Vianney Rodriguez in her studio kitchen, Cocina Gris.

Photo by Jason David Page

ABOVE

Joey and Laurie Roland show teeth from an extinct three-toed horse at their ranch.

Photo by Dave Shafer

Making Magic With Vianney

MEET VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, the Corpus Christi foodie who will be inviting readers into her kitchen every month as *TCP*'s new food editor. You first met Vianney in December 2020, when she wrote in delicious detail about *pan dulce*.

She fell in love with cooking as a child in Aransas Pass. "Growing up watching my *abuelita* and mami cook together in perfect sync ... They were creating magic. I wanted to be a part of this world and have been cooking ever since."

Vianney—"simply say the letters V-N-A"—started her blog, Sweet Life, in 2009, joining the online conversations that she saw as "mini love letters to food." Her passion kept growing. "I have authored two cookbooks—*Latin Twist*, a cocktail book featuring cocktails from Latin countries, and *The Tex-Mex Slow Cooker*."

Today she works out of her studio kitchen, Cocina Gris—gray kitchen—where she can't wait to dive into more reader recipes from Co-op Country.



“Don’t be told something is impossible. There’s always a way.”

—ROBERT RODRIGUEZ

FINISH THIS SENTENCE THANKS, DAD, FOR ...

TCP Tell us how you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or comment on our Facebook post. Include your co-op and town.

Here are some of the responses to our April prompt: **I drove all night to ...**

Find myself *still* in the great state of Texas!

ROXANNE NEWMAN
VIA FACEBOOK

Be by my mother’s bedside in her final hours.

ELLEN ROZNECK COULTER
VIA FACEBOOK

Be at the gate when he got a weekend leave.

MARTHA BEIMER
VIA FACEBOOK

Get back to Texas, and I kissed the ground when I did.

RICHELLE NASH
GRAYSON-COLLIN EC
SHERMAN

Get to Concan after heavy spring rains so I could float the Frio.

LISA HOLLOWAY FITZSIMMONS
VIA FACEBOOK

Visit our website to see more responses.

QWERTY, USA

When typing while using proper form on a QWERTY keyboard, only two U.S. states' names can be typed using just one hand (overlooking the need for the shift key for capitalization). Texas is one of them. Ohio is the other.



TCP Contests and More

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Holiday Desserts

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Helping Out

RECOMMENDED READING
National Egg Day, June 3, reminds us of all the great reader recipes on our website that use eggs—especially those found in *Eggs: Plain and Fancy* from March 2016.



Welcome Signs

With the arrival of 470,708 people in 2022, Texas became just the second state to surpass 30 million residents—now with 30,029,572. The other one? Well, that would be California, with 39,029,342.

Super Cool or Old School?

THE FIRST LP came out 75 years ago this month, when Columbia released the New York Philharmonic's rendition of Mendelssohn Violin Concerto in E minor as a long-playing record June 21, 1948.

Since then, we've hoarded records, then eight-track and cassette tapes, and compact discs. Those made way for digital files and streaming as our favorite music ended up both in a closet and in the cloud.

But take heart, record geeks: Vinyl albums outsold CDs in 2022 for the second year in a row.



DANA SMITH

Grounded in Mystery

“An East Texas minister built an airship that supposedly flew in 1902. It was destroyed before it could fly publicly at the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis.”

VAL L. ERWIN
COSERV
LANTANA

442nd’s Heroism

My father took part in the rescue as a member of an antitank company [*Rescue of the Lost Battalion*, February 2023].

The 442nd suffered 800 casualties rescuing 211 Texans. After the battle, Gen. John E. Dahlquist ordered everyone in formation to congratulate them. He scolded the regimental commander that he wanted *everyone* there. The commander stood at attention and replied, “That’s all that’s left.”

Sidney Miyakawa
CoServ
Lewisville

Bless your heart [A *Pet Project*, March 2023]. It’s the hardest thing fur parents have to do, but it’s our last, best gift to them. You’ll know when it’s time.

MARY HENDERSON
HARP
VIA FACEBOOK

Sacred Memory

As a boy growing up in north Louisiana, we would go exploring on a small creek near my house [*Caught Cuisine*, February 2023]. Along one stretch of the creek was a very low area that always contained numerous pitcher plants. The local name for the plants was preacher in a pulpit.

John Tubb
Medina EC
Houston

Wreaths Matter

Thanks to TCP’s December 2022 mention [*Wreaths for the Fallen*] of the November 2018 *Circle of Life* article about the impact of Wreaths Across America in Texas. That story helped grow 86 WAA Texas locations to 313 in 2022, with over 250,000 wreaths placed on veterans’ graves. Nationwide, over 2.7 million wreaths were placed at 3,702 locations.

Ellen Fuller
Bryan Texas Utilities
Bryan

My dad, Jack Andrews, was a proud member and captain in the 442nd in World War II. The 442nd ended up being the most highly decorated unit for its size and length of service in U.S. military history. The 442nd was also credited as being one of the first to find Dachau and release prisoners.

Bill Andrews
Big Country EC and Pedernales EC
Shackelford County and Buda



DAVE SHAFER

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

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TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 79, Number 12 (USPS 540-560). *Texas Co-op Power* is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives. Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 77 electric cooperatives. *Texas Co-op Power’s* website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com.
SUBSCRIPTIONS Subscription price is \$4.44 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50.
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SCRATCHING THE SURFACE

WEST TEXAS RANCHERS team up with researchers to unearth artifacts



LEFT Graffiti on the plastered walls of Fountain House at Fort Chadbourne dates to 1870.
TOP Artifacts, such as this nail, sometimes emerge after rains. ABOVE Rosettes that went on horses' bridles denoting cavalry Company F.



LEFT Garland and Lana Richards outside the restored east barracks at Fort Chadbourne. ABOVE Looking through the walls of the ruins of the west barracks, across the parade grounds and to Fountain House.

In its heyday, more than 150 years ago, Fort Chadbourne housed 450 soldiers. Today, it sits by its lonesome on a desolate rise in West Texas. Six restored limestone buildings and others, crumbling but stabilized, surround the parade grounds.

The inhabitants are long gone, but traces of them remain.

Garland Richards' family has lived on ranchland here, north of Bronte, in rural Coke County, for eight generations. The site includes a former stagecoach stop on the Butterfield Overland Mail Co. route and the remains of the frontier fort, used by the U.S. Army 1852–67.

Richards, a member of Taylor Electric Cooperative, knew history was being lost to time and the elements.

"When I was a kid, there was a waist-high adobe wall here," he says. "In my lifetime, it has melted to ground level."

The Richardses and another West Texas ranching family, knowing their properties hold remarkable history, are trying to stop the destructive march of time, welcoming excavations by archaeologists and paleontologists and

preserving important stories.

In 1999, soon after he inherited the property, Garland and his wife, Lana, set up the nonprofit Fort Chadbourne Foundation and gave the fort to the foundation to preserve and protect it. They marked a grid over an aerial photo and began keeping meticulous records.

"Everything we have found has been recorded on the grid," Richards says. "You do the best you can with the money you have and common sense."

Their first goal was to stabilize the weathered fort buildings, making them safe to work in and around. Lana took grant writing classes and got the needed funding.

"We joined the Concho Valley Archeological Society and let them come," Lana says. "It was one way of learning about what we had." CVAS members under the direction of Larry Riemenschneider, a Concho Valley Electric Cooperative member and volunteer steward with the Texas Historical Commission, began unearthing the fort's past.

The volunteers cost the Richardses a lot of bologna sandwiches, Lana says, but the workers are proud of their part in excavating a frontier fort. I know that's true, because 15 years ago, my husband and I participated in a Fort Chadbourne dig, working alongside a group of military retirees. The painstaking work of troweling and then sifting through the soil removed from meter-square sections was balanced with the joys of minor discoveries and the unsettling real-

ization that humans leave behind a lot of debris.

“We found almost half a million artifacts below the floor of the double officers’ quarters—the dogtrot house where rancher Tom Odom and his wife raised 13 children,” Garland says. In 1877, the Odoms purchased the land from well-known pioneer Mary Maverick and turned the fort into a ranch headquarters.

“The archaeological picture of Fort Chadbourne is probably more complete than any other Texas military site,” Garland says, based on the number of artifacts recovered.

The 12,500-square-foot Fort Chadbourne Visitor Center opened in 2012 to give people a firsthand look at some of the military, ranching and Native American history of West Texas. Half of the center’s exhibits sit inside a spacious walk-in vault with displays of cavalry items uncovered during digs: buckles, spurs, buttons, helmet badges and metal powder flasks along with flattened bullets used as poker chips. A Native American exhibit contains 48 large knife and spear points found near the fort in a foot-square cache that dates back 6,000 years. There’s also a 450-piece antique gun collection and a replica stagecoach.

A walk around the fort and into the buildings puts the center’s displays into perspective. Even in daylight, the quiet creates a haunting atmosphere. Inside the restored Fountain House, bullet holes in its thick, plastered walls shared space with graffiti from 1870 on. After circling the unrestored hospital and the restored barracks, I spotted a rusty, 4-inch sliver of metal on the ground. Garland explained it was a square-headed nail common until 1880 or so. “You’re in the Butterfield stage corral area,” he says. “It’s littered with artifacts.”

Each excavation answers some questions but raises others. Ground-penetrating radar has revealed a building that isn’t mapped.

If you discover archaeological treasures on your land, contact your local archaeological society, Lana recommends. “We did this correctly, thanks to Larry’s help,” she says.

Millions of Years Away

WHILE exploring family property near Snyder, about 80 miles northwest of Bronte, Tina Roland came across large bones eroding out of a gully. Determined to find somebody who could identify the bones, Roland contacted Eileen Johnson, professor of museum science and a paleobiologist at Texas Tech University.

When Johnson went to Snyder in 2005 to see the discovery, she found herself looking at bones dating from 1.8 to 2.6 million years ago, a time known as the Early Pleistocene. The gully marked an ancient stream bed.

“We knew this was important and exciting. We’re still working 17 years later,” Johnson says. “There are a handful



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE Laurie and Joey Roland inside the 15-foot-deep paleontological dig site at Roland Springs Ranch. Graduate student assistant Madison Westfall tends to specimens from the ranch that are filed at the Museum of Texas Tech University. An ancient tortoiseshell recovered from the ranch.





of Early Pleistocene sites in the country of this age, but none has this diversity of species or is so well preserved.”

Numerous wading birds, camels, rabbits, giant tortoises and ancestors of coyotes, mountain lions and prairie dogs lived here once. Fossils have revealed the first appearance of some animals and the last appearance of others. Microbiological material excavated with the bones gives clues about the ancient plant community and climate.

The paleontological site is 15 feet deep and measures approximately 30 feet by 30 feet. For six weeks each summer, a small international crew trowels up dirt and washes the sediment through a fine mesh screen. Joey Roland, Tina’s son, and Joey’s wife, Laurie, host the field camp, providing small cabins next to their house and pool. “They are both very much involved,” Johnson says.

“I’m not a paleontologist, but they’ve taught us so much, mostly during talks around the pool after work,” says Joey,

a member of Big Country Electric Cooperative. “A random bone is exciting, but it doesn’t tell a story. It’s out of context. For us, this is fascinating. I love it, and I’ve fought tooth and nail to protect it.”

With doggedness, he managed to get an oil pipeline diverted around the site. Unlike archaeological sites, no federal or state laws protect paleontological sites.

Laurie loves the picture that the finds suggest: huge Galapagos-like tortoises roaming the West Texas grasslands about 2 million years ago with tiny, three-toed horses grazing nearby. She is thrilled to sometimes find prehistoric bones on the surface after a rain. “Humans have never seen or touched them,” she says. “How could you not know that’s special?”

The Rolands share their findings with their community, allowing the Scurry County Museum in Snyder to offer seasonal public tours at the site. The museum has a temporary exhibit of casts made of the finds. The Museum of Texas Tech’s Roland Springs Ranch materials are part of ongoing lab research and not currently viewable by the public.

“Joey and Laurie are the first and only landowners I know with the willingness to let people on their land,” Johnson says.

“It’s selfish not to let them come to the site,” Laurie says. “Texas is about hospitality.”

Texas has millions of years of buried history—giant mammoths, dinosaurs, oyster reefs, frontier trails. Does that make you wonder what could be in your backyard? ■



‘On Juneteenth’

A Pulitzer Prize-winning historian describes the holiday’s long path out of Texas

TO MY SURPRISE some years back, I began to hear people outside of my home state, Texas, talk about, and *actually celebrate* the holiday “Juneteenth.” June 19, 1865, shortened to “Juneteenth,” was the day that enslaved African Americans in Texas were told that slavery had ended, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation had been signed, and just over two months after Confederate General Robert E. Lee had surrendered to Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox. Despite the formal surrender, the Confederate army had continued to fight on in Texas until mid-May. It was only after they finally surrendered that Major General Gordon Granger, while at his headquarters in Galveston, prepared General Order Number 3, announcing the end of legalized slavery in the state.

The truth is, I confess here, that I was initially annoyed, at least mildly so, when I first heard that others outside of Texas claimed the holiday. But why? After all, it was a positive turn in history, evidence that our country was leaving behind, or attempting to, a barbarous institution that had blighted the lives of millions. Such a thing should be celebrated far and wide.

My twinge of possessiveness grew out of the habit of seeing my home state, and the people who reside there, as special. The things that happened there couldn’t have happened in other places. Non-Texans could never really understand what the events that took place in Texas actually meant. I am certain that I’m not alone in this attitude.

From my earliest days, it was drummed into me and, I believe, other young people growing up in Texas at that time, that we inhabited a unique place that we were always supposed to claim, and of which we were always supposed to be proud. I’ve noticed over the years, that it is hard to meet a person from Texas who does not, at some point in the conversation, let you know, either with a drawl or without, that he or she is from the state.

My proprietary attitude about Juneteenth quickly disappeared. Rather than keeping the holiday to ourselves, Texans have been in the forefront of trying to make Juneteenth a national holiday. As I think of it, it’s really a very Texas move to say that something that happened in our

state was of enough consequence to the entire nation that it should be celebrated nationwide.

It has been offered, as part of the justification, that the end of slavery in Texas was the end of the institution period. That’s not quite true. Granger’s order did not end slavery in the country. That did not happen officially until December 1865, when the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution was ratified by the necessary number of states. But it is significant that Texas was the site of the tail end of the Confederate war effort. As the war had been fought to preserve slavery, celebrating Juneteenth throughout the land is a fitting way to mark the end of that effort.

It also is fitting to think of Texas in relation to the nation for another reason. The state has been described as a bellwether for what the United States will become; the term “Texification” has come into use to describe a process that is, supposedly, of recent origin.

The history of Juneteenth, which includes the many years before the events in Galveston and afterward, shows that Texas, more than any state in the Union, has always embodied nearly every major aspect of the story of the United States of America. That fact has been obscured by broad caricatures of the state and its people, caricatures that Texans themselves helped to create and helped make the state seem exotic, almost foreign to the rest of the Union.

My Texas roots go deep—on my mother’s side back to the 1820s, on my father’s side at least to the 1860s. Significantly, my wide-ranging approach to Juneteenth reveals that behind all the broad stereotypes about Texas is a story of Indians, settler colonialists, Hispanic culture in North America, slavery, race, and immigration. It is the American story, told from this most American place. ■

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JUNETEENTH

COMMUNICATED ANNUALLY ON JUNE 19TH, 1865, BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE U.S. ABRAHAM LINCOLN, PROCLAIMED THAT "ON SEP. 22, 1862, BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, A.D. 1865, IN REBELLION, AND FOR THE FREEDOM OF THE SLAVES, THE U.S. SHALL BE AND PASS THE 13TH AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION TO END THE INSTITUTION OF AFRICAN

APRIL 1865 MOST SLAVES IN TEXAS WERE SET FREE. THIS BEGAN TO CHANGE IN GALVESTON MAJ. GEN. G. W. BURNETT, DISTRICT OF TEXAS, POSTERMAN BUILDING (STRAND NO. 3) ON JUNE 19, 1865. TEXAS ARE INFORMED THAT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EXECUTIVE ORDER, ALL SLAVES ARE FREE. THIS INVOLVES ALL RIGHTS AND RIGHTS OF FREE AND SLAVES." WITH THIS GAIN!

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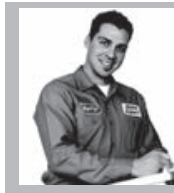


Based on an 1818 painting that depicts John Adams, Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin presenting a draft of the Declaration of Independence

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

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

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



Dear
Darryl

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

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

Clogged and Smelly – Lubbock, TX

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

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SeptiCleanse® Shock and Maintenance Programs are designed to work on any septic system regardless of design or age. From modern day systems to sand mounds, and systems installed generations ago, I have personally seen SeptiCleanse unclog and restore these systems in a matter of weeks. I highly recommend that you try it before spending any money on repairs. SeptiCleanse products are available online at www.septicleanse.com or you can order or learn more by calling toll free at 1-888-899-8345. If you use the promo code "TXS19", you can get a free shock treatment, added to your order, which normally costs \$169. So, make sure you use that code when you call or buy online.

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I guess I was a little bored. For the past hour, I'd been on the phone with Daniele, the head of my office in Italy, reviewing our latest purchases of Italian gold, Murano glass and Italian-made shoes and handbags.

"Daniele," I said, "What is the hottest jewelry in Italy right now?"

His reply? Woven gold bracelets studded with gems. He texted me some photos and I knew immediately that this was jewelry that Raffinato just had to have.

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AEROSPACE FIELD OF DREAMS

In an unassuming building amid farmland near McDade, the small manufacturing company Quad-M is creating high-flying systems for use in space.

The Cygnus spacecraft, high above Florida with a view toward the south, in 2017. The darkened rectangular metal device on its bottom left holds a cube satellite dispenser designed and built by Quad-M.

Photo courtesy NASA

Quad-M employees display some of the devices they have built for use in space, including hardware to hold and deploy small cube satellites. From left are machinist Michael Morrelli, CEO Tyler Holden, president Gina Reat, production manager Chris Moore, machinist John Velazquez, shop foreman Bob Picard, vice president of engineering Alex Kuehn and engineer Mandy Hiatt.

Photo courtesy Quad-M



FEAS



By Melissa Segrest

THE RURAL LANDSCAPE about a mile west of the community of McDade cradles an unlikely business. The aerospace engineering and manufacturing firm Quad-M has turned its little piece of northern Bastrop County countryside into a field of outer space dreams.

There's no sign outside the company's nearly windowless, cream-colored metal building on narrow Old Highway 20, just a stone's throw from traffic hurtling along U.S. 290. Farm buildings dot the landscape. On a recent workday, a couple of Chevy Silverados and low-key SUVs sat in the small caliche parking lot. There are no flashy sports cars here.

The 8,000-square-foot facility looks as if it could house farm equipment, not high-tech machinery. But you can't judge a cutting-edge space company by its terrestrial shell.

What starts here ends up 250 miles or higher above the Earth.

Inside the building, Quad-M's team of nine full-time engineers, machinists and other skilled employees create devices for out-of-this-world experiences. They design, manufacture, test and assemble systems that hold, then eject, very small satellites into low-Earth orbit from the International Space Station or from rockets, including SpaceX's Falcon 9 and spacecraft such as Northrop Grumman's Cygnus.

Its in-demand aerospace systems have deployed more than 300 cube satellites, or CubeSats, on more than 20 launches.

The company's inventive devices have helped speed the pace of pushing these multifaceted mini-satellites into space. Quad-M is a 21st century ideas-into-space-delivery business.

The smallest one-unit CubeSat is about 4 inches square, weighs only a few pounds and can sit in the palm of your hand. Quad-M's hardware and devices vary in shape and size to hold different-sized CubeSats. A typical Quad-M dispenser holds 3-unit satellites — a few inches longer than a loaf of bread. The biggest CubeSat

Continued on next page

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dispenser the company built can hold a 16-unit satellite.

CubeSats aren't the only payload Quad-M's systems can shoot into space: employees are currently fabricating a deployment system for a device weighing over 1,600 pounds.

Cube satellites are used by research students, scientists, governments or private companies for communication, technology testing, research and Earth observation. The small satellites study the planet for a multitude of reasons: to monitor weather patterns, measure solar flares, assess disasters like floods or fires, plan roads or maritime transportation lanes, examine environmental concerns, and strengthen military defenses and border security.

Commercial users deploy CubeSats for tasks as varied as studying parking lot activity at stores and helping farmers with their planting. Two CubeSats were sent by NASA to soar above Mars in 2018.

Commercial needs for the small satellites — which are exponentially less expensive to build and launch than their earlier counterparts, some of which weighed in at more than a ton — have created a growing and lucrative field.

Most of Quad-M's aerospace competitors are big companies with equally big budgets. But bigger isn't always better. In fact, it can be slower, more expensive, less flexible and not as innovative. And Quad-M — now employee-owned — continues to innovate, fueled by the vision and drive of its late founder, McDade native Victor Dube.

DUBE WAS BORN in Elgin in 1941 and grew up in a log cabin on a cattle farm. At Elgin High School, one counselor told him he was "not college material." Despite that pessimistic prediction, Dube earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from The University of Texas at Austin and a master's degree in civil engineering from Marquette University in Wisconsin.

In 1972, he started working at Austin-based Tracor, a defense electronics contractor. There, Dube helped develop countermeasure defense systems for aircraft and missiles. After Tracor, he founded Quad-M in 1989 and first tried his hand at building superchargers that could quickly add extra horsepower to vehicles.

The name Quad-M was probably a reference to the four manufacturing machines the company had in its early days, said Bob Picard, who started working with Dube in 1990 and now is the company's shop foreman.

Dube dreamed of developing aerospace technology and made that shift at Quad-M in 2012.

The company's big space breakthrough



Tyler Holden, left, and Quad-M founder Victor Dube in 2018 in Dulles, Va., at the Orbital ATK facility. They were checking the fit of their first Slingshot bracket, the golden structure behind them, on the front of the Cygnus spacecraft. The Slingshot, built by Quad-M, is used to deploy cube satellites into orbit. Orbital ATK, which produced the Cygnus spacecraft, was later purchased by Northrop Grumman.



Above, Victor Dube, the founder of Quad-M, in the 1970s when he worked at Tracor, the defense electronics contractor in Austin; at left, Dube at Quad-M with some of the cube satellite hardware he helped make. 'Victor was an innovator, a dreamer and an exceptional engineer,' said Quad-M engineer Alex Kuehn. Photos courtesy Quad-M and Judith Dube

came in 2014. Dube worked with Mike Johnson, co-founder of Nanoracks, a service provider for space missions, to design and build the first commercially operated device to deploy cube satellites from the International Space Station. That system, which is still in use, has launched more than 300 CubeSats from the crewed space station orbiting 250 miles above the Earth.

When propelled into space from a metal chute, the satellites resemble long shoeboxes, dwarfed by the massive station.

You can watch a video of a 2014 deployment in action on YouTube, at bit.ly/3mz6zxU.

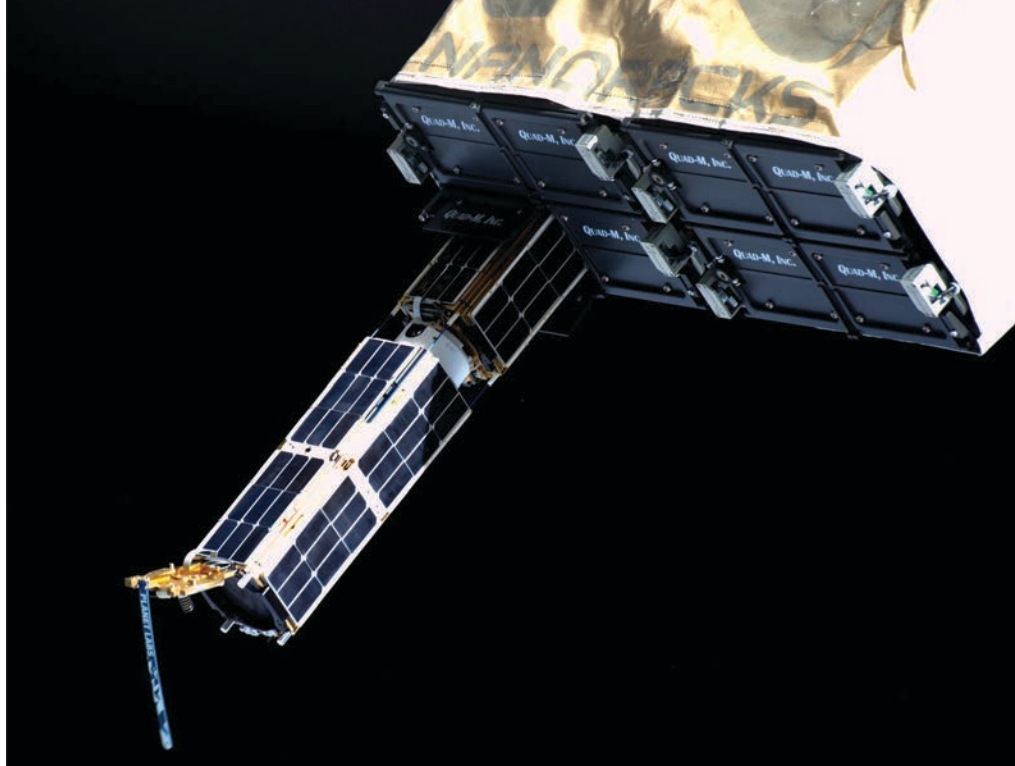
From that beginning, Dube and his team created a variety of systems to shoot

satellites into space.

Working in conjunction with Johnson's next company, SEOPS, Quad-M created the Slingshot system to attach to the front of a Cygnus cargo spacecraft. After separating from the space station, Cygnus can travel another 80 miles higher in orbit before ejecting CubeSats. That extra distance helps the satellites stay in orbit longer.

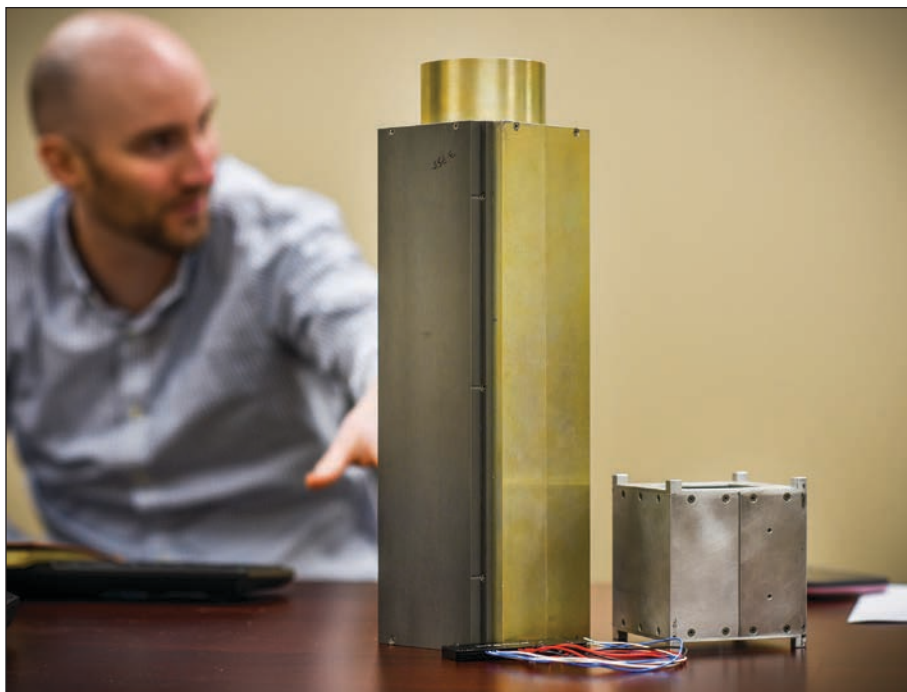
Dube and his co-workers even patented a new type of leaf spring that can fold flat to eject satellites with plenty of force. They also did miscellaneous non-aerospace manufacturing when time allowed.

While at Quad-M, Dube found time to instill interest in rocket science with a few far-reaching projects for McDade ISD



Quad-M designed and built the systems that deploy cube satellites from the International Space Station in 2015, at left. The company's system has deployed more than 300 small satellites from the space station. Below left, CEO Tyler Holden with some components made at Quad-M: the model of a 3-unit cube satellite and one for the smallest 'CubeSat,' a lightweight 4-inch by 4-inch device. The models are the same size and weight as the functional satellites and are used for testing. Below right, Alex Kuehn, Quad-M's vice president of engineering, shows the way the company's patented 'leaf spring' device can fold down to eject satellites into space.

Top photo courtesy NASA; Sarah Beal photos



students. (See story, Page 23.)

Dube died at 80 on Jan. 24, 2022. His wife of 56 years, Judith Dube is a retired teacher and still lives in the McDade area. Their three children have had accomplished careers: Mark Dube is a mechanical engineer at BAE in Austin (formerly Tracor), Shawn Dube is an electrical engineer at Dell and Michal Dube, who worked as operations manager for Quad-M for several years. There are 10 grandchildren.

“VICTOR’S GUIDANCE, kind nature and formidable engineering abilities were outstanding examples to follow for anyone lucky enough to work with him,” said Tyler

Holden, who joined the company in 2014 and became Quad-M’s CEO in 2022. “It was an absolute privilege to learn from him for so long, and I consider myself extremely lucky to have had the chance.”

Holden, 36, of Bastrop, is originally from Maine. He credits the encouragement of a high school teacher for his initial exploration of 3-D computer-aided design. With a bachelor’s degree in electromechanical engineering from Vermont Tech and some work at a big company under his belt, he came to Texas looking for a job in the aerospace industry.

He liked Victor Dube, Quad-M’s size and the fact the company had its own machine shop. “You learn a lot about design

from the machinists and an experienced engineer like Victor,” he said.

Alex Kuehn is the company’s 28-year-old vice president of engineering. She grew up in Wisconsin, studied aerospace engineering in Arizona, built prototype aircraft in Minnesota and worked briefly at a small rocket propulsion company in Utah before talking to Dube in 2018. “I knew the opportunity to work on stuff that would go to space was too good to pass up. So I packed up my life and moved to Texas.”

Today, she focuses on product design and analysis, business development of Quad-M and helping establish the new Xterra line of aerospace products.

Continued on next page



At top, in Quad-M's 4,000-square-foot machine shop, computer-programmed milling machines and lathes turn pieces of aluminum or stainless steel into hardware for space. Above, the exterior of Quad-M's unassuming workplace near McDade. At right, production manager Chris Moore does the complex work of programming one of the company's machines.

Sarah Beal photos

Continued from previous page

She, too, spoke of Dube's impact on the company and the industry.

"Victor was an innovator, a dreamer and an exceptional engineer, but most importantly, he was a great person who took care of people," Kuehn said. "By the time Victor passed away, he was largely responsible for deploying more satellites than any other single individual we're aware of."

Gina Reat of Giddings, Quad-M's president, has worked there seven years. "If it's not engineering or machining, it's my job," she said, "which means accounting, purchasing, receivables, human resources, janitor and whatever else needs doing."

"When Victor passed away we were all devastated. Not only did we lose our boss, but a leader, friend, father figure and

encourager," Reat said. But Quad-M employees kept going. "That's when we realized the importance of the legacy Victor left us. We are still in business because he created a culture of training and teamwork."

Bob Picard of McDade, shop foreman and quality manager, started working with Dube in 1990. "I've done every job in the shop: training new employees, programming, setting up and running all the machines," he said. Chris Moore of Bastrop, the production manager, started in 1996.

There are two other machinists, and a new engineer started last year. As of late April, Quad-M had a job opening for another engineer.

In addition, a small number of contractors bring specialized skills in software, aerospace, mechanical or electrical engineering to Quad-M's components.

INSIDE QUAD-M, projects usually start in the engineers' room. Each works in front of multiple screens, converting what may begin as a sketch of a rough concept into detailed 3D renderings of components.

The action then moves to the 4,000-square-foot machine shop, where machinists operate four computer-programmed milling machines and two lathes that precisely control the shaping and shaving of aluminum or stainless steel pieces destined for space.

The shop's white floor suggests laboratory cleanliness, while barrels of metal filings are a reminder that this work is as tough as it is sophisticated. Several employees who operate the machines learned to manage the production processes under Dube's watchful eyes.

Precision is essential, so a measuring

Thanks to Victor Dube, McDade students made, watched launch of their own cube satellites

By Melissa Segrest

VICTOR DUBE, the founder of Quad-M, loved his hometown of McDade and its very small school district of about 330 students.

He wanted to give students a taste of creating something for outer space, just like the engineers and machinists were doing at his company.

So he helped them build cube satellites, one of which was later ferried by a SpaceX rocket to the International Space Station, for launch into low-Earth orbit — a school project for the cosmos.

“The first year he went to the McDade school to recruit students, the high school students didn’t want to give up their summer,” said Judith Dube, Victor’s wife. “So the middle school students took part.”

Colby Miller was 9 when he started working on the project in 2018.

“When Colby wanted to go back to school in the summer, I had to wonder what he was up to,” said Joey Miller, Colby’s father and a member of the McDade ISD School Board. “When he told me they were building a satellite, I said ‘Don’t get me in trouble here.’”



Students from McDade ISD traveled to Florida in 2018 to watch a cube satellite they helped create launch on a SpaceX rocket that carried it to the International Space Station. The special school project was the brainchild of Quad-M founder Victor Dube, who worked with the students. The students and two chaperones flank astronaut Anna Lee Fisher (in blue), who flew on the Space Shuttle in 1984. From left are Tristan Ledlie, Colby Miller, Michael Pruett, James Dube, Jessica Dube (the two are Victor and Judith Dube’s grandchildren), Kelsey Dube, parent Carolyn Mitchell, Juliana Alejo, Jocelyn Howard, parent Barbara Marchbanks and Josh Dube. *Photo by Amanda Miller*

Colby and eight other students — all in middle school — worked through that summer and into the school year designing and assembling two cube satellites.

Dube showed the students how to use computer-aided design software to develop specifications. He took them to the Quad-M facility to show them how the small satellite components are made. Using their schematics, the company’s machinists and others helped the students create two reflector-covered, simple-but-functional CubeSats, as they are called in the aeronautics industry.

Because Quad-M makes devices that deploy CubeSats into space, when Dube learned that one of its dispensers scheduled for an orbital flight wasn’t full, he got one of the students’ CubeSats on board.

McDade residents raised money to help

the students and their parents travel to Florida’s Cape Canaveral to see their creation launch in December 2018. It was a cloud-nine field trip.

When the high schoolers learned what the middle school students had built, they wanted in on the spaceflight action. So Dube repeated the program, allowing three interested high school students to build their own CubeSat and travel to Florida to see its launch. Dube died in January 2022 at 80.

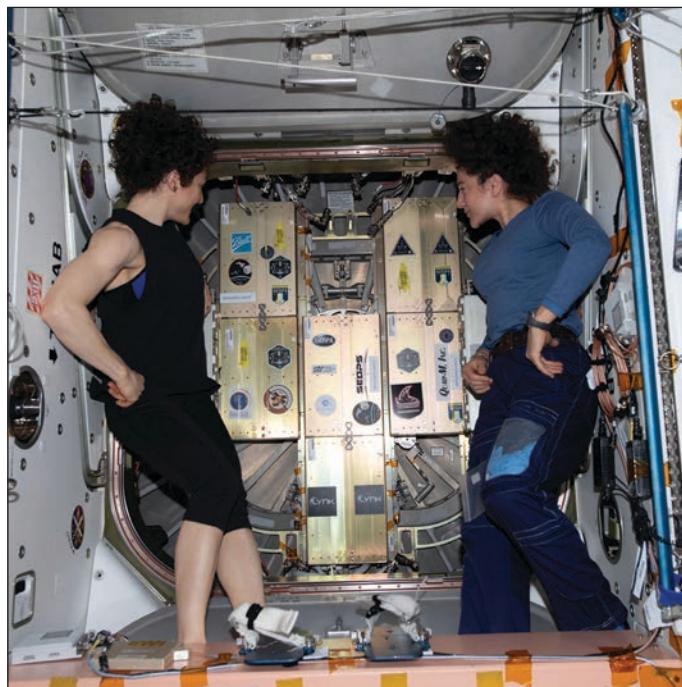
“Assembling the satellite was a cool experience — seeing it all come together with everyone,” Colby Miller said. Now he is 14, and more interested in playing basketball and being a teenager, his father said, “but he’s also interested in architecture now, in designing and building something.”

machine compares finished pieces to engineers’ requirements. Some features must be accurate to within .0005 of an inch. A fine human hair, by contrast, is about .0015 of an inch.

The final in-house steps for hardware happen in the assembly area, which grew to 3,000 square feet in 2019. There, employees scrutinize finished pieces, some of which have just returned from outside vendors after receiving specialized coatings to reduce friction or damage from space travel. Hardware and parts are cleaned and assembly begins.

Sensors and cameras allow employees to test how a satellite will move or tilt when it flies out of a dispenser. Quad-M employees take their hardware to facilities in Austin, Houston, Dallas or California to undergo testing for launch readiness. That includes tests to withstand extreme vibration and sudden rapid acceleration or deceleration. “The force of, say, a car smashing into a

Continued on next page



Astronauts Christina Koch, left, and Jessica Meir on the International Space Station after completing the 2019 installation of the Slingshot satellite dispenser system. The system was created by Quad-M and SEOPS, a service provider for space missions. The two astronauts made history in 2019 by making the first all-female spacewalk, outside the International Space Station. Photo courtesy NASA

Continued from previous page

wall, or more. It can be pretty aggressive,” Kuehn said.

Now, new cutting-edge components are being created under the brand of Xterra, Quad-M’s recently formed parent company. Xterra has four patents pending on new aerospace products, Kuehn said.

More potential customers are reaching out to Quad-M as its reputation grows.

For now, though, the company will stay tucked away on Old Highway 20. There’s still some room to expand in the metal building, although eventually a new, larger facility will probably be needed.

Holden and Kuehn hope the company will continue to grow, but not too fast.

The group maintains Dube’s vision, that a smaller team is better. Jobs they finish in months would take years for bigger companies to complete, they say. “We’re probably the smallest company that does this,” Holden said.

“There are times we’re working on stuff and we say ‘Gosh, I wish Victor were here to see this,’” Kuehn said. “I think he would be proud of what we’re doing now.”

“On some level he wanted to show the aerospace industry what we could do. That we have all these capabilities.”

Being part of the space industry was exciting for Dube and his team. Whenever they had the chance, employees would gather to watch live video of their equipment shoot satellites into space.

TODAY IS A TIME of big ideas about the evolution of space exploration. The Artemis program includes plans to return humans to the moon in 2025, using NASA’s Orion spaceship and Space X’s massive Starship, which is the most powerful rocket ever to fly. A planned permanent base on the moon would set the stage for humans’ first mission to Mars.

Quad-M’s employees think about the possibility of sending devices far enough out to orbit the moon, Mars and maybe even Venus. “I’ve always wanted to set altitude records,” Holden said.

Do aerospace engineers dream of going into space?

“Is it always in the back of my mind? Yeah,” Kuehn said.

“Yeah, I do,” Holden said. “I wouldn’t think twice about it. My wife would probably yell at me, but, yes.”

No one recalls Victor Dube saying he would like to go into space. He was a practical man whose vision was for the world to discover the aerospace breakthroughs taking place in the building off Old Highway 20.

That’s how he probably wanted Quad-M to continue: Onward and upward. ■

More aerospace businesses in the Bluebonnet region

By Alyssa Meinke

QUAD-M ISN’T the only company in the Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative service area with aerospace-related missions. Within a 100-mile radius of the small McDade-area business are three other space technology companies.

X-Bow Systems Inc., which makes solid rocket motors and defense technologies, announced earlier this year the opening of a rocket manufacturing campus 4 miles north of Luling in Caldwell County.

The campus is being built on a portion of land that was previously Caldwell County Carter Memorial Airport. The company also plans to use land nearby on FM 2984. X-Bow has announced it plans to invest \$25 million to develop 150 acres on which it will build, manufacture and test rockets on the properties. The company also promises the facility will bring dozens of jobs to the area.

Development of the Caldwell County facility began last year and is expected to be finished in the next two years. The site is already in use with a completed hangar and multiple rocket test pads. Using 3D-printed materials, X-Bow creates solid-fuel rocket motors and launch vehicles for national defense labs and a U.S. Department of Defense agency. Solid rocket engines are used as boosters to launch satellites or other objects on orbital and suborbital flights. The company also manufactures propellants and motors, and offers launch services.

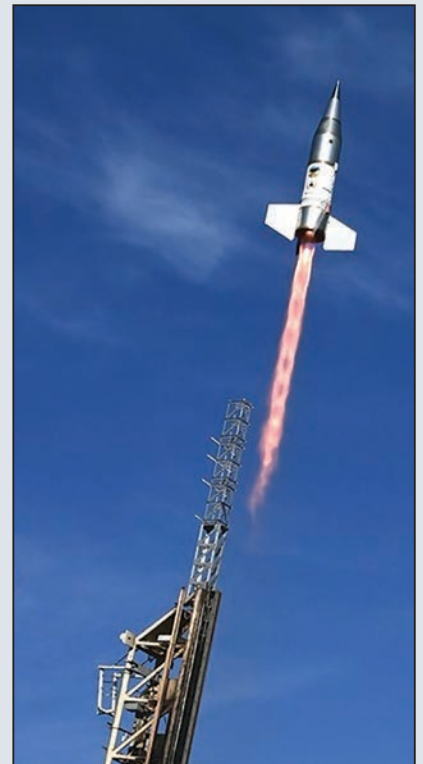
The New Mexico-based company, founded in 2016, touts its innovative, cost-effective products. It also has facilities in Alabama, California, Colorado and Washington, D.C.

Another aerospace industry manufacturer that has operated in the Bluebonnet region for decades is HDL Research Lab in Brenham, in Washington County. The company, which manufactures electronics for converting power voltage for use in military defense aerospace applications, was founded in 1973 by Heinz D. Lichtenberg. Its products are used in radars, digital instrument panels, guidance systems and electronic warfare systems. The Brenham-based business worked with NASA to supply products for NASA’s

Lidar In-Space Technology Experiment, which studied Earth’s atmosphere and global climate, and was launched in space in September 1994. Since then, it is focused primarily on products for aircraft and spacecraft for the Department of Defense.

The company is now run by Lichtenberg’s son, Kai Lichtenberg, and employs more than 130 people in its 88,000-square-foot facility, where staff design and manufacture its products, a mile north of downtown Brenham.

The third aerospace industry business in the Bluebonnet region is SpaceX (Space Exploration Technologies Corp.), the well-known rocket manufacturer/launcher and satellite communications company owned by Elon Musk. According to a job posting and comments from a SpaceX representative at a public meeting, SpaceX plans to use its Bastrop County-based facility to manufacture equipment for Starlink, its affiliated satellite-based broadband internet system.



X-Bow tests its Bolt rocket at New Mexico’s White Sands Missile Range in July 2022. The company is building a testing and manufacturing facility near Luling in Caldwell County. Photo courtesy of X-Bow Systems

CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH



Juneteenth celebrations in Central Texas date back to the 19th century, and were occasions for public outings and dressing up, as evidenced by this group gathered in Austin in 1900. *Photo courtesy Austin History Center*

Holiday marks the arrival of freedom in Texas

JUNETEENTH, June 19, marks the date in 1865 when a Union general landed at Galveston to announce that all Texas slaves were free. This was two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and two months after the surrender of the Confederate Army.

In 1980, Juneteenth officially became a Texas state holiday, and in 2021, Juneteenth was officially designated a federal holiday.

Keep an eye on Bluebonnet's social media pages to learn about area Juneteenth events. Email socialmedia@bluebonnet.coop to let us know of your community event.

Bluebonnet offices will be closed June 19 in honor of the holiday.

TEXAS FREEDOM COLONIES

In the late 1800s, people who had been enslaved and their descendants in rural areas realized sharecropping would never lead to their dream of independence and true freedom. So, a movement began in Texas and other southern states for Black Americans to form their own landowner communities, unincorporated and remote from whites. They chose uncultivated rural land that was cheap or could be claimed as untitled.

Growth of these settlements, sometimes called freedom colonies, peaked in the early 1900s, with 31% of Black Texans owning land.

About 400 of these settlements developed, including St. John Colony on the Bastrop-Caldwell county line, Nunnsville in Lee County and Mount Fall in Washington County. Get more information from the Texas Freedom Colonies Project at thetexasfreedomcoloniesproject.com.

7 ENERGY-SAVING TIPS FOR A HOT SUMMER

SUMMERTIME IN TEXAS means triple-digit temperatures and the AC struggling to keep up with the thermostat setting. Try some of these energy- and money-saving tips to prevent a soaring electric bill and still stay comfortable this season.

1 Cool where you are: No need to keep a ceiling fan running when you aren't in the room. Fans bring down the wind chill that cools your skin, not the actual temperature of a room. Turn them off when you leave. Consider blackout curtains to cut the heat of direct sunshine in a room, too.

2 Find your ideal temperature: Comfortable? Now turn the thermostat up 2 degrees and get used to that. Then every few days, turn the temperature up a couple of degrees and see what you can get comfortable with. Try to get to 78 degrees. This is especially important from 3 to 7 p.m., and could save as much as 10% on your electric bill.

3 Leave the house: Is 78 degrees too warm for you or your family, even with fans going and curtains drawn? If you can, head for someplace cool every few days, like the library, grocery store, shops or coffee shops.

4 Track your energy use: Download the MyBluebonnet app on your phone or go to bluebonnet.coop where you can create an online account or log in. You can track your energy use and compare it to this time last week, month or year. Check out other energy-saving tools on your online dashboard.

5 Turn it off: Lights can eat up electricity. As you leave a room, turn off lights and lamps.

6 Get rid of vampires: Small appliances like computers and radios can silently eat electricity, even when not in use. Either plug them into an advanced power strip that can be turned off or unplug them when not in use or charging.

7 Use some smart tools: Upgrade or begin using programmable or smart thermostats to more efficiently control temperature settings in your home, especially when you're away.

For more energy- and money-saving ideas, go to bluebonnet.coop/energy-saving-tips.



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Special Delivery

How a crudely scrawled message 300 years ago saved its sender's life

BY W.F. STRONG • ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN WILSON

THE LUCKIEST LETTER in Texas took six months to reach its destination. But the fact that it arrived at all was a miracle within a miracle, and it saved the sender's life. This was more than 300 years ago, when Texas was under Spanish rule. It was a Hail Mary mailing.

François Simars de Bellisle was just 24 when he left France to come to America in 1719. He was headed for Louisiana on a small ship, but his captain overshot their destination, ending up near present-day Galveston, about 300 miles off course.

Bellisle and four other French passengers took meager supplies—biscuits, guns, swords—and went ashore to determine their location and seek help. They slept well that first night, but when they

awoke the next morning, their ship was gone. They had been abandoned.

They walked east to what was likely the mouth of the Sabine River, where they could go no farther because of deep mud. Soon they began to succumb to starvation, and within two months, Bellisle had buried all his friends. He was alone and desperate.

Bellisle believed he was living his last days. He had made his way back to Galveston Bay, out of bullets and reduced to eating boiled grass and worms. Then one clear morning, he saw the first Native Americans he had seen since being stranded. They were Akokisas and his only hope for survival.

He made his way across the bay in a

TCP Listen as W.F. Strong narrates this story on our website.



crude boat he had found. The Akokisas took his goods and stripped him. He wrote that he was forced into labor, ordered about mercilessly and beaten regularly—but fed.

After a forced 150-mile walk to the Brazos River to hunt buffalo, he couldn't help but marvel at the landscape, later writing, "This is the most beautiful country in the world. The earth is black. Grass grows there to a prodigal height, and in abundance, which is a certain sign that the earth is good."

Bellisle soon realized his situation was still dire. So he retrieved one of the few pieces of paper he had, carved a crude pen out of wood, and made ink out of charcoal and water. He wrote a letter begging for rescue from anyone who might receive it and gave it to visitors from the Bidai tribe.

Then the miracle: Members of the Hasinai tribe, which had close ties to the French, took it to the commander of the garrison at Natchitoches, Louisiana. The commander, Louis Juchereau de Saint-Denis, wrote a letter in return and ordered the Hasinai to bring the cast-away back, dead or alive.

When Bellisle's rescuers reached the Akokisa camp, they gave Bellisle the letter that informed him the Hasinai would escort him to Natchitoches. His captors relented.

It still took him months to get to Natchitoches, but at least Bellisle was free. He had sent what was the land version of a message in a bottle. It caught the best currents and washed up on the perfect shore. His literacy—and luck—saved him. ■

Texas Seafood

The catch of the day sparkles in these inventive dishes

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Growing up near the Gulf, my mami loved getting shrimp from local shrimpers. One evening she surprised us with shrimp *albóndigas*, succulent meatballs swimming in a rich tomato broth. Served with warm corn tortillas, this dish is comfort at its best. I am excited to share my mami's recipe—a bit of her love from my home to yours. Enjoy!

Albóndigas de Camarón (Shrimp Meatballs)

½ pound Roma tomatoes
½ pound tomatillos
6 cups shrimp or vegetable broth, divided use
1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
1 egg
2 teaspoons dried oregano
1–2 tablespoons masa harina (corn flour)
2 tablespoons olive oil
½ onion, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
2 medium carrots, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 teaspoons cumin
3 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
½ cup rinsed and chopped cilantro
Rice, steamed (optional)
4 corn tortillas, for serving
Sliced radishes, for garnish
Cilantro, rinsed and chopped, for garnish

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place tomatoes and tomatillos on a baking sheet. Roast until skins have charred, turning occasionally, 10–13 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool.
2. Blend the cooled tomatoes and tomatillos in a blender or food processor with 1 cup broth until smooth. Set aside.
3. Pulse shrimp in cleaned food processor until finely ground.
4. Move ground shrimp to a bowl. Add egg, oregano and masa harina. Mix by hand until well combined.
5. Lightly oil clean hands and form shrimp mixture into ¾-inch meatballs. Place meatballs on baking sheet and refrigerate to keep firm.
6. In a stock pot or Dutch oven, add olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery and carrots and sauté until tender, about 4 minutes. Stir in garlic and cumin and cook 30 seconds. Stir in tomato mixture and cook an additional 2 minutes.
7. Add remaining broth and bring soup to a boil. Reduce heat to low and season with salt and pepper. Gently add meatballs to broth. Simmer without stirring 8–10 minutes. Stir in cilantro.
8. Serve over steamed rice or alone as a soup. Garnish with radishes and cilantro and serve with warm tortillas.

SERVES 4

TCP Follow along with Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Skillet Pico de Gallo Shrimp.



Hatch'en Cocktails

ANN CYCHOSZ
TRI-COUNTY EC

Cychosz stashes away a few hatch peppers when they're in season to whip up these shrimp cocktails, a neighborhood favorite. Feel free to use canned roasted hatch peppers. Served in cocktail glasses, this appetizer will be a hit at any gathering.

SHRIMP

- 1 tablespoon salt**
- 2 pounds Gulf shrimp, peeled and deveined**

COCKTAIL SAUCE

- 3 cups ketchup**
- 2 tablespoons horseradish**
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce**
- 1 teaspoon hot chili sauce**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**
- Juice of 2 limes**
- 3 avocados, pitted and cut into ¼-inch cubes**
- ½ cup diced red onion**
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro**
- 1 cup chopped roasted hatch peppers**
- Tortilla chips, for serving**

- 1. SHRIMP** Bring a pot of water to a boil and add salt. Add shrimp and cook 2–3 minutes, or until shrimp are cooked through.
- 2.** Remove shrimp with a slotted spoon, place on a baking sheet and allow to cool.
- 3.** Cut shrimp into ¼-inch pieces.
- 4. COCKTAIL SAUCE** In a large bowl, stir together ketchup, horseradish, Worcestershire sauce, hot chili sauce, pepper and lime juice.

\$500 WINNER

Escabeche

KARA HILL
WOOD COUNTY EC



Hill's husband has fond memories of his Filipino mom cooking fresh fish that he, his brother and dad caught. This escabeche has the perfect level of acidity to pair wonderfully with black drum, a white fish with a mild, sweet flavor.

SERVES 6



FISH

- 6 black drum fillets (about 2 pounds total), skin removed**
- Salt and ground black pepper**
- ¼ cup flour**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**

ESCABECHE

- ½ cup white vinegar**
- 1 cup water**
- ⅓ cup brown sugar**
- 2 teaspoons soy sauce**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- ¼ cup cold water**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 4 cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 tablespoons minced ginger, fresh or jarred**
- 1 medium onion, sliced**
- 1 small red bell pepper, sliced**
- 1 small green bell pepper, sliced**
- 1 small yellow bell pepper, sliced**
- 2 medium carrots, julienned**
- 3 cups cooked rice**

- 1. FISH** Preheat oven to 250 degrees. Gently pat down fish with paper towels. Season fish with salt and pepper. Place flour in shallow dish.
- 2.** Lightly dredge fish in flour, coating each side, and shake off excess. Place on baking sheet and repeat until all fillets are coated.
- 3.** In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Pan-fry fish until golden-brown on each side, 2–3 minutes. Place on baking sheet, then repeat until all fillets are fried.
- 4.** Place fish in oven.
- 5. ESCABECHE** In a bowl, stir together vinegar, water, brown sugar and soy sauce.
- 6.** Dissolve cornstarch in cold water.
- 7.** In a large skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic and ginger until fragrant, stirring often, about 3 minutes. Do not let the garlic and ginger brown.
- 8.** Add onion, bell peppers and carrots and sauté for 2 minutes. Pour vinegar mixture into skillet. Cover and bring to a boil.
- 9.** Remove cover, add cornstarch mixture, and return to a boil, stirring until sauce has thickened. Serve fish over rice, then top with escabeche.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

HOLIDAY DESSERTS DUE JUNE 10
We'll help cap off your holiday feasts with reader recipes in the November issue. Submit yours online by June 10 for a chance to win \$500.



CONTINUED >

5. Add shrimp, avocado, red onion, cilantro and hatch peppers. Stir gently to combine. Chill until ready to serve. Serve with tortilla chips.

SERVES 12

Jamaica Beach Snapper

GEORGE GRALL
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

Dinner ready in under 15 minutes? Yes, please. Baked snapper served warm with a chili butter sauce is the ultimate week-night dinner. Roast or steam vegetables while the fish bakes and have dinner ready in a snap.

4 red snapper fillets (6 ounces each)
½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted
2 tablespoons garlic powder
1 tablespoon chili powder
1 large lemon, cut into wedges
Parsley (optional)

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees.



2. Generously coat a 9-by-11-inch pan with cooking spray and place snapper fillets in the pan.

3. Bake 15 minutes or until the fish flakes easily with a fork.

4. Combine melted butter, garlic powder and chili powder in a bowl and stir until well blended.

5. Drizzle butter mixture over fish and serve with lemon wedges and garnished with parsley, if desired.

SERVES 4

Shiphape Shrimp

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Texas Gulf shrimp is a great ingredient for meals that can come together in under 30 minutes. Not sure how to buy and store fresh shrimp? Follow these tips, then check out two amazing shrimp recipes in this month's issue:

Look for firm, translucent shrimp.

Avoid shrimp with slimy shells and any that smell like ammonia.

Place fresh shrimp in a bowl on ice to maintain freshness in the fridge.

Uncooked shrimp stay fresh in the fridge for up to three days.

Freeze shrimp for up to two months.

Thaw frozen shrimp overnight in the fridge.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Kilgore's Kickers

The Rangerette museum preserves the legacy of the iconic drill team

BY CHET GARNER

FOOTBALL IS AN EXPERIENCE in Texas. It's about much more than just what happens when the players snap the ball. I mean, what would the Dallas Cowboys be without their cheerleaders? They certainly couldn't be America's team without America's sweethearts, right? And if you've ever danced in a drill team or enjoyed the precise high kicks and jump splits of these athletes, then you have the women of Kilgore College to thank.

I traveled to East Texas to pay my respects and visit the official museum of the Kilgore Rangerettes—America's first precision dance drill team.

After filling my belly with pork ribs at Country Tavern Bar-B-Que, I cruised Kilgore, between Tyler and Longview, and passed the towering oil derricks of the "World's Richest Acre," which once held 24 wells on one city block. In the 1930s, Kilgore was the definition of a boomtown.

While football games at Kilgore College were popular, the college's president became irritated with fans leaving at half time and drinking under the stands. So in 1940 he tasked teacher Gussie Nell Davis with figuring out a way to keep fans in the stands. Her solution was to bring a group of talented dancers onto the field. It launched a multibillion-dollar industry.

I stepped into the Rangerette Showcase and Museum and was immediately impressed with mannequins showcasing the evolution of the uniforms. While the skirts may have been scandalous at the time—they dared to show knees—the uniform is now iconic. I appreciated the short film giving context to the stories and was blown away by the number of photos depicting Rangerettes with celebrities and presidents throughout the decades.

I'll never think of drill team dancing the same way again. Now to work on my high kick! ■

ABOVE Chet's style might not be *precisely* what the Kilgore Rangerettes look for in a dancer.

TCP The Rangerettes' perfected routines are exactly what drew Chet to Kilgore. See the video on our website and see all his Texplorations on *The Daytripper* on PBS.



Know Before You Go

Call ahead or check an event's website for scheduling details, and check our website for many more upcoming events.

JUNE

08

Coleman [8-10] Rodeo, colemanrodeo.com

09

Johnson City Dive-In Movies, (830) 868-7111, johnsoncitytx.org

Blanco [9-11] Lavender Festival, (830) 833-5101, blancolavenderfest.com

Ingram [9-10, 16-17, 23-24] Newsies, (830) 367-5121, hcac.com

Kerrville [9-10, 16-18, 23-25] Beer for Breakfast, (830) 896-9393, caillouxperformingarts.com

10

Brenham Tapestry: The Carole King Songbook With Suzanne O Davis, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Fredericksburg Craft Beer Festival, fbgcraftbeerfestival.com

Nacogdoches Texas Blueberry Festival, (936) 560-5533, tbf.nacogdoches.org

Terrell [10-11] Antique Tractor and Engine Show and Pull, (214) 497-1611, north-texas-antique-tractor-and-engine-club.net

11

Lufkin Madagascar the Musical, (936) 633-5454, angelinaarts.org

15

Stonewall [15-17] Peach Jamboree and Rodeo, (830) 644-2735, stonewalltexas.com

Galveston [15-19]
Juneteenth Celebrations,
 (409) 457-3570,
visitgalveston.com

17

Linden Underground Railroad Quilt Auction and Performance,
 (903) 826-2495,
lindenpubliclibrary.org

22

Fredericksburg Women's Ranch Seminar,
 (830) 456-8956,
hillcountrycattlwomen.org

23

McKinney [23-24] Flip Orley: Comic and Hypnotist, (214) 769-0645,
thecomedyarena.com

30

Hemphill [30-July 2] Patriotic Weekend on Toledo Bend, (409) 787-2732,
sabinecounty-chamber.com

Ingram [30-July 28] Summer ArtMart, (830) 367-5121,
hcaf.com

JULY

01

Johnson City Fourth Fest Parade and Fireworks,
 (830) 868-7111,
johnsoncitytx.org

The Colony Liberty by the Lake, (972) 624-5253,
visitthecolonytx.com

03

Giddings [3-4] Freedom Fest and Fury on the 4th,
 (979) 542-3455,
giddingstx.com

04

Kerrville 4th on the River, (830) 315-5483,
kerrvilletx.gov

TCP Submit Your Event

We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your September event by July 1, and it just might be featured in this calendar.



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The handle is made from genuine natural bone, and features decorative wood spacers and a hand-carved motif of two overlapping feathers—a reminder for you to respect and connect with the natural world.

This fusion of substance and style can garner a high price tag out in the marketplace. In fact, we found full tang, stainless steel blades with bone handles in excess of \$2,000. Well, that won't cut it around here. We have mastered the hunt for the best deal, and in turn pass the spoils on to our customers.

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— H., Arvada, CO



Dad

Sharing their passions and leading their families, dads play an important role in the everyday life of Texans. These reader entries warm our hearts and make us smile. Gather around the family album as we celebrate dear old dad.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ

1 HEATHER MEIFERT
COSERV

"This is daddy's little girl, Madison."

2 KARI ZIMMERMAN
HAMILTON COUNTY EC

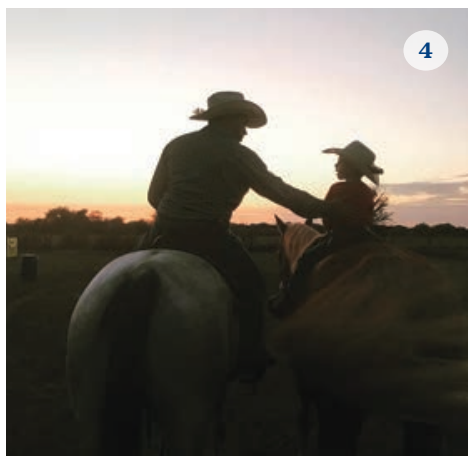
"My grandson shelling peas with his gramps. Such a sweet moment."

3 MONA PARISH
SAM HOUSTON EC

First piano lesson with Pops, the man behind the dad.

4 GALE STEVENS
BOWIE-CASS EC

"My son Jared Stevens of Campbell and his son Tyler ride almost every day and rodeo on weekends."



Upcoming Contests

- DUE JUN 10** Helping Out
- DUE JUL 10** Golden Hour
- DUE AUG 10** Mailboxes



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



Texas Water Safari participant Courtney Shaver collapses in her boat after a difficult portage.

Ending on a Sour Note

Here's a first: Accomplished competitor falls short of the finish line

BY PAM LEBLANC
PHOTO BY ERICH SCHLEGEL

I BAILED OUT OF THE BOAT in Cheap-side—which sounds like a line in a country-western song.

But this was no two-step. I staggered out of a racing canoe under a highway on the Guadalupe River, 154 miles into a 264-mile paddling race called the Texas Water Safari. It was the very first DNF of my life. I laid down my paddle, sobbed a bit and barfed.

My team went on without me.

Quitting's a weird thing. When I tell this story to friends, a lot of them nod and say, "You might have hurt yourself if you'd continued."

But that's not it, exactly. I quit because a tiny voice inside my head suggested I do it, and I listened. I didn't want to slog 100 more miles in 106-degree heat. And so, after 32 hours of nonstop paddling,

I bid my tough-as-nails teammates adieu.

Looking back, I foretold my meltdown. I was afraid of the heat and the low river flow.

In 2019, I finished the race, which starts at Spring Lake in San Marcos and ends at Seadrift on the Texas coast, in about 53 hours as part of a three-woman team. I vowed then never to do it again. But when veteran paddler Deb Richardson invited me to join her five-person crew, I forgot about the alligators, mud, log jams, spiders and hallucinations and signed up.

I began spending every weekend on the river. On race day last June, we lined up our 40-foot boat at the back of the pack. When the starting horn sounded, we sliced through the crowd like we were parting the Red Sea. Then, just a few hundred yards in, our rudder cable snapped, and we fell into last place.

Over the next six hours, we picked off boat after boat, clawing our way from 138th position to 100th, then 50th. We nailed every portage and cut through every rapid. That first night, the frogs were so loud you couldn't hear anything else. I was giddy.

But it was hot, and the water was so low, we had to drag through dozens of gravel bars. My muscles got weak, my butt sore. Racers don't stop to sleep or admire the scenery, and I got weepy.

After I quit and went home, I slept 12 hours. I woke up to news that my team had climbed into 18th place. I sped back to cheer them on.

In the end, half the 138 boats that started quit. My team finished in just under 77 hours, in one of the toughest years in the race's 59-year history.

I couldn't be prouder.

And this time I'm not kidding. I'm never doing it again. ■



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