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OF THE STATE

THE PAUL REVERE
OF TEXAS

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LOVED ONES ARRIVE

Texas Coop Power

FOR BLUEBONNET EC MEMBERS

MARCH 2024

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**BLUEBONNET
EC NEWS**

SEE PAGE 16



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along the Mighty Mississippi

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Haru, an Australian shepherd, works on his leaping skills.

Photo by Tom Hussey

ABOVE

The ring of fire during the annular solar eclipse October 14, 2023, as seen near Bandera.

Photo by Erich Schlegel

Channeling Safety

WHEN DANNY WILLIAMS, below left, started his career as a lineworker at McCulloch Electric Cooperative—which no longer exists—in 1965, color TVs were the latest technology coming into homes.

Williams and his co-workers in Brady made sure the power always stayed on for those TVs. “I loved linework,” he says. “I loved climbing.”

Williams later became an instructor, teaching work skills and safety to utility employees. And in 2007 he became manager of Texas Electric Cooperatives’ Loss Control program, where he changed (and likely saved) lives at co-ops across the state.

Williams, 80, will retire this month after more than 38 years of teaching generations of lineworkers, in a career that spanned seven decades.

“Oh, my God, how many people has he touched?” says TEC’s Curtis Whitt, a co-worker for 21 of those years. “Countless. To do it as well as he’s done it for as long as he’s done it is a pretty incredible feat.”

TCP Visit our website to read more about Danny Williams.



A Power Trip?

Four electric school buses in South Burlington, Vermont, deliver more than students. When sitting idle during school hours, their batteries store excess renewable energy that can be pumped back onto the grid.

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RECOMMENDED READING

Learn how Hoover Alexander, a fifth-generation Texan, came to run Hoover’s Cooking, a beloved Austin diner. See *A Full Plate* from March 2009 on our website.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

Music makes me ...

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 January prompt: **If I could turn back the clock ...**

It would mean that I finally figured out how to work the buttons.

GEORGE GRAHAM
PEDERNALES EC
WIMBERLEY

I would look at the clock less.

ROSIE PEÑA
NUECES EC
CORPUS CHRISTI

I would talk to my mom and dad for days on end—just to hear their voices again.

LISA STANLEY
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
JOSHUA

Visit our website to see more responses.

JANUARY 2024 Moment's Notice

“There’s an expression around Laredo: ‘Six flags over Texas; seven flags over Laredo!’ ”

SHERI ULAN-SWEET
BLUEBONNET EC AND CENTRAL TEXAS EC
LEXINGTON AND FREDERICKSBURG



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Required Reading

We love *Texas Co-op Power*. We home-school and use a lot of the recipes and articles in our lessons.

Karly Woods
Via Facebook

Shamrock Memories

My wife and I stayed at the old Shamrock Hilton on the last weekend it was open [*The Green Carpet*, January 2024].

The place was still amazing, but it clearly had a lot of deferred maintenance, making it look a little threadbare—a remnant of a time gone by.

In the lounge, if you ordered one drink, they would keep bringing you more of the same—I guess figuring that everything they gave away was one less thing they’d have to pack up or throw away.

Mike Blanche
United Cooperative Services
Morgan



COURTESY HOUSTON HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER | HOUSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

What Desert?

When I flew from my Southern California hometown into San Antonio in May 1968 for U.S. Army basic training at Fort Sam Houston, I was surprised by a lush, green landscape (plus millions of crickets) instead of a barren desert [*How Texas Became a Desert*, December 2023].

Even more shocking was finding that the Alamo had been moved to downtown from the countryside where John Wayne defended it from Santa Anna’s forces.

Steve Mallery
Heart of Texas EC
Robinson

On Second Thought

I enjoyed Frederick Law Olmsted’s assessment of Austin and New Braunfels [*Appraising the Texas Landscape*, November 2023]. I believe he would be appalled at the destruction of the natural beauty and wildlife he witnessed in the 1850s.

Harvey H. Wetz
GVEC
New Braunfels

TCP WRITE TO US
letters@TexasCoopPower.com

Editor, Texas Co-op Power
1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor
Austin, TX 78701

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

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A Midday Matinee for Millions

Where will you be when a once-in-a-lifetime
total solar eclipse darkens Texas next month?



BY PAM LEBLANC

Back in October

when the moon passed between the Earth and the sun in a celestial display known as an annular eclipse, I headed to Lost Maples State Natural Area in the Hill Country, donned a pair of goofy cardboard glasses and gazed skyward.

The field around me bristled with telescopes and tripods, all directed at the slow-moving phenomenon, which looked to my untrained eye like a frying pan slowly moving in front of a bed of glowing coals. Just as the moon lined up with the face of the sun, creating a halo of yellow, a cheer arose, and someone cranked up Johnny Cash's *Ring of Fire*.

As fun as that was, it was just the warmup for what's coming April 8, when Texans will get front-row seats at an even more impressive spectacle—a total solar eclipse.

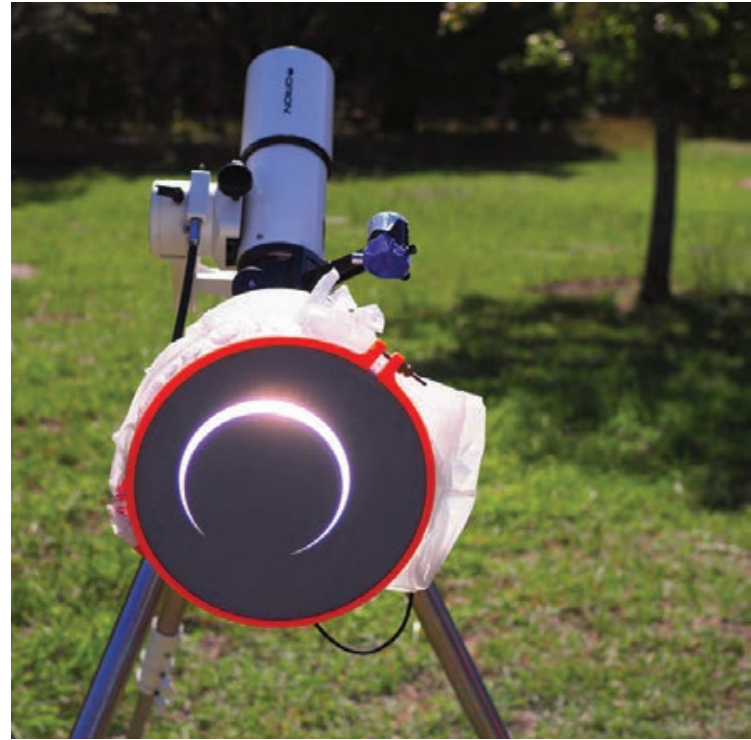
The last total solar eclipse viewable from the U.S. occurred August 21, 2017—but Texas wasn't in the path of totality. Those who peered at it (through special safety glasses, of course) from here saw the moon's shadow creep across the sun but never fully blot it out. Other parts of the country experienced totality.

"A really good total solar eclipse is an emotional experience," says astronomer Phil Kelton, former assistant director and superintendent of the McDonald Observatory in Fort Davis. "They're awe-inspiring events, like nothing else in nature. The annular eclipse was a poor second."

In April, the eclipse's path of totality will cross Mexico, enter Texas near Eagle Pass, and slowly crawl northeast across the state. Kerrville, Bandera and Waco are all near the centerline, so watchers there will get a good show. Much of the Metroplex will experience totality, as will parts of Austin and San Antonio.

After crossing into Oklahoma and Arkansas, the eclipse will pass through 10 more states before moving out of Maine and into Canada.

The whole event—from the time the moon first bites into the sun—will last roughly 3 hours in Texas. But the duration of totality will vary by location. In Vanderpool and Ingram,



for example, it will last 4 minutes and 26 seconds; in Austin, farther from the centerline, it will last less than two minutes. The start of totality will also vary, occurring between 1:27 p.m. and 1:40 p.m. depending on where you're viewing.

During those few minutes, skies will grow significantly darker. It'll feel cooler, and some animals may exhibit twilight behaviors. If skies are clear—and chances of a clear sky are historically higher in Texas than they are farther north and east across the U.S. at that time of the year—bright stars will become visible.

"It's one of the great events of nature," Kelton says. "There's an element of majesty and awe that occurs during a total solar eclipse. Only in the last few hundred years has man understood enough about the cosmos to appreciate what was causing it."

Total solar eclipses occur every few years at different locations around the globe. After this year's event, an eclipse in 2033 will impact a small part of Alaska, and one in 2044 will affect Montana and the Dakotas. The next total eclipse to carve a broad swath across the country, though, won't take place until August 12, 2045.

Now's the time to plan. People are traveling to Texas from all over the world for the April eclipse, and many lodges and campgrounds in the path of totality are already booked.

Don't panic.

"The path is huge. You don't have to be in a special place," says Shaun Tarpley, an architect from League City who chases eclipses to photograph them. He and his wife, Ashley, an aeronautical engineer who works at NASA, traveled to Lost Maples with their son for the annular eclipse and plan to return to the Hill Country in April.

OPPOSITE Maxine Margolis Smith experiences the thrill of the October 14, 2023, annular solar eclipse from near Bandera. ABOVE The eclipse is projected onto a "screen" that Jeri Evans rigged from a bucket attached to a telescope in Vanderpool.

SMITH: ERICH SCHLEGEL; TELESCOPE: PAM LEBLANC



“There’s an element of majesty and awe that occurs during a total solar eclipse.”



LEFT Irene Ramos participates in a spiritual drum circle near Bandera.

“As long as you’re in the path, you can get out on the side of a road,” he says. “If you’re in the area, you’ll be able to experience it.”

When I drove to Bandera County for the annular eclipse, I spotted fields with hand-painted “camp here” signs planted among the ash junipers and oaks.

Eclipse watchers had gathered for a celebration at Stonehenge II, a scaled-down version of the British original on the lawn outside the Hill Country Arts Foundation in Ingram. (Festivities are planned next month, too.) And at Lost Maples, campgrounds and day-use areas were packed.

Among those I met was Frederic Allegrini, an astrophysicist and amateur astrophotographer from San Antonio who drove 2,500 miles in four days to see the 2017 eclipse in Tennessee. He and his wife wanted to be in the path of totality because, as he told her, doing anything else is like being 95% in love. “It has to be 100% or nothing,” he says.

And then there was Laura Hermann of Spring, who stood

at a table loaded with snacks and used a Moon Pie and a bag of Sun Chips to demonstrate how the eclipse would unfold.

For those with deep pockets, touring companies like Smithsonian Journeys offer luxurious guided tours through the Hill Country, with eclipse watching at Becker Vineyards near Stonewall and stops at other Central Texas sites.

For a less expensive experience, reserve a day pass at one of the Texas state parks in the path of totality. Enchanted Rock and Lost Maples will be popular destinations, but spots will fill up quickly. Reservations at Enchanted Rock open 8 a.m. March 11, and reservations for all other state parks open 8 a.m. March 8. Lower Colorado River Authority parks are another option, with special activities at some locations, including Black Rock Park on Lake Buchanan.

If your favorite park is booked, check out Campspot’s regularly updated guide of sites in the path that still have availability. At RVshare, you can book an RV directly from the owner.

BELOW Frederic Allegrini sets up his camera gear at Lost Maples State Natural Area. RIGHT Liam Tarpley uses eclipse-safe sunglasses to watch the annular eclipse.



Stare Safely

Never look directly at the sun through a camera, binoculars or a telescope without proper solar filters.

Only use glasses made specifically for eclipse viewing; they're about 100,000 times darker than ordinary sunglasses.

View the eclipse indirectly with a pin-hole projector or see what it does to shadows by holding up a colander from your kitchen.

Plan ahead: Folks from all over the U.S. are already booking rooms in the Hill Country, and traffic could be tricky.

If you want a side of music with your eclipse, consider the family-friendly Eclipse Utopia at Four Sisters Ranch in Utopia. Camping is available, and the event includes workshops, disc golf, hiking, biking, yoga and two days of live music. Closer to Bandera, the Ground Zero MusicFest includes everything from live music and a classic car show to a cornhole tournament and space alien costume contest.

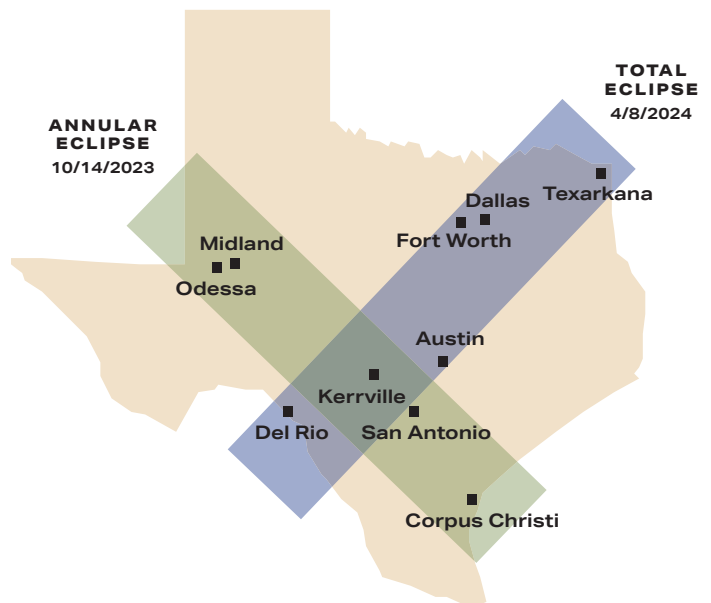
Wherever you go, arrive early, protect your eyes and embrace the experience.

That's what Emma Ransome and Pavol Klacansky, both from Austin, did during the October eclipse. I found them stretched out in the grass at the campground at Lost Maples, listening to a special playlist they had compiled, grinning behind their eclipse glasses.

"We've been able to slowly watch it evolve," Ransome says. "It's very relaxing."

And the opening act only got them more excited about the April main event. ■

TCP For more guidance about viewing safety and making your eclipse experience memorable, visit our website. And for a deeper dive into the wonders of the eclipse, check out nationaleclipse.com.



T O P D





BY MARGARET BURANEN • PHOTOS BY TOM HUSSEY

Coaches help canine competitors reach new heights—and grow closer to their humans

Growing up in South Korea while her dad served in the U.S. military, Abby McMillin had two dreams. First, like Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*, she wanted to return home to Kansas.

When her family did finally move back to Kansas, McMillin started working on her other dream: becoming a veterinarian. In high school she started working at a veterinary clinic. There she met a dog that would change her life and her career path.

Taz was a large German shepherd. He was scared and aggressive. Nobody could get near the snarling animal. McMillin decided to try to reach him anyway.

She tossed kibble into his kennel, not even making eye contact with him. She also sometimes sat with her back to the outside of the kennel door. “I just wanted Taz to know that I was there,” McMillin says.

Gradually Taz calmed down and began to trust McMillin. He allowed her to pet him and put a leash on him. Later he accepted affection from other people. Eventually he was adopted by a woman who gave him the loving home he deserved.

The clinic’s veterinarians were amazed at McMillin’s success with Taz. They sent her to work with a professional trainer to learn more about dog behavior.

“He became my mentor,” McMillin says. She realized that communicating with dogs and other animals, trying to figure out what they needed and why they behaved in certain ways, interested her much more than animal health.

Today McMillin is the owner of Triple H Dog Training, where she teaches classes of humans and canines how to work together at her facility in Mineola, northwest of Tyler.

In short, she coaches dog athletes.

Every year, the American Kennel Club and other organizations host thousands of dog sporting events across the U.S. that draw more than 1 million competitors.

But 35 years ago, in 1988, when the United States Dog Agility Association organized the first major sporting competition for dogs—the Grand Prix of Dog Agility World Championships—just 79 competitors from across the U.S. came to Houston for the three-day event. Today, more than 100 events nationwide qualify dogs and their humans—representing more than 20 countries—for regional championships and, ultimately, the world finals.

Abby McMillin guides Apollo, her golden retriever, over an agility training ramp.

The sports encompass a range of competitions for dogs, including agility and herding, racing and jumping, obedience, and tracking and hunting trials. The growth of dog sports has become big business as trainers like McMillin build careers out of teaching people how to compete alongside their pets.

McMillin, a Wood County Electric Cooperative member, lives in Mineola with her husband, Nick; their 2-year-old son, Levi; and seven dogs. One dog, a Great Pyrenees mix, prefers couch lounging to dog sports. The other six, including three golden retrievers, compete.

Border collies, Australian shepherds and Shetland sheepdogs are among the most popular breeds to produce athletes, but there's something out there for just about every dog.

If one canine sport isn't suitable for a dog and its owner, McMillin urges the owner to try something else. Many dogs enjoy agility training, but their owners may realize they aren't fit enough for this fast-paced sport. Rally, which involves only walking, may be a better choice.

Besides, it's "more about relationship building, so the dog owner and dog develop a lifetime friendship," McMillin says. "I want people to enjoy their dogs."



OPPOSITE McMillin with six of her dogs, which learn balance and control on a seesaw at her training facility. RIGHT Apollo goes airborne to catch a flying disc.

For training at home, McMillin advises dog owners to “keep it short. Keep it fun. Keep it simple. Don’t do 30 minutes once a week. Do five minutes every day. For the first week or so, the owner has to get in the habit of training, too. Remember dogs don’t work for nothing. They’re motivated by treats or toys.”

McMillin uses a hand-held clicker to reinforce behaviors. With this method, she has also trained horses and cats, even an otter. Training allows the dog and owner to become a team and have a closer relationship. “It’s not about the ribbons,” she says. “It’s about going home with the best dog ever.”

Another trainer, Debi Krakar, started the Dog Alliance in Cedar Park, outside Austin, in 2006. There she trains therapy dogs and offers classes in various dog sport disciplines.

Krakar, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, says that the raft of dog sports offers an excellent outlet for pups. “When they’ve been mentally stimulated and exercised, they won’t eat your shoes,” she says. “Dog sports build a bond between human and dog. They understand each other better.”

Krakar got into dog training after taking her own dog to schools for children to read to. “Teachers kept calling me,” she says. “The demand for these therapy dogs is constant.”

For owners who aren’t sure which dog sport might be best for them and their pups, she offers a dog sports foundation class that covers the basics. Because when it comes to man’s best friend, it’s really about building relationships.

“Have fun and be positive with your dog,” Krakar says. “In the long run you’ll have a much stronger bond with your dog.” ■



Games That Aren't Far-Fetched

AGILITY Dogs run through an obstacle course that includes tunnels, blocks to jump on and vertical poles to weave through.

BARN HUNT Popular in rural areas, dogs run into barns and signal where rats are hiding.

DISC DOG This is a variation of the basic game of fetch. The dog’s owner throws a flying disc that the dog catches (usually by jumping up in the air) and retrieves quickly.

DOCK DIVING Dogs race down a ramp and leap out into a pool of water to retrieve a toy thrown by the owner.

FAST CAT No felines are involved! Short for coursing ability test, dogs of any breed are timed as they race around a 100-yard track, chasing an artificial lure.

LURE COURSING Sight hounds race around an oval or rectangular course that measures 650–800 yards, chasing an artificial lure.

RALLY Dogs walk to various stations and follow various commands from their owners at each one.

SHED HUNT Pups retrieve shed deer antlers from a field within a set time period.

TRACKING Dogs follow the scent of a lure that was earlier dragged through a course.

TRICKS Beyond the basic commands of sit, stay, come and lie down, dogs learn to perform more advanced commands or follow hand signals.

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. Never ones to miss an opportunity, we climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch.

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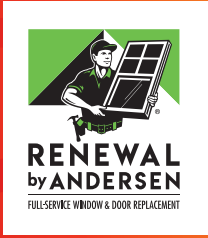
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A RARE SOLAR

On Monday, April 8, residents of the Bluebonnet service area will be treated to a rare celestial event: an eclipse that will darken the midday sun across the region.

By Sharon Jayson

STUDENTS ACROSS the Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative area are readying special telescopes and protective eyewear. Astronomy experts and photographers are brimming with excitement. Public safety departments are preparing for the likelihood that drivers will abruptly stop to stare into the sky.

That is because Monday, April 8, will not be just a routine school and workday across Central Texas. It is a day that holds the promise of witnessing a once-in-a-lifetime event.

Just after noon, the path of a total solar eclipse will move from south to north over a 100-mile-wide swath of Central Texas. Only a slice of that “zone of totality” will be visible in the Bluebonnet area, in western Manor in Travis County.

If the sky isn't cloudy that day in Manor, at 1:37 p.m. people will be able to see the new moon pass precisely between the sun and Earth, blocking the sun's face and leaving only its outer atmosphere, or “corona,” visible. (See more about statewide viewing, Page 6).

But don't fret if you aren't in that ideal location. The eclipse will still be a super celestial event across the entire area.

“The sunlight will become dim and eerie, and trees will cast unusual shadows on the ground,” said Michael Zeiler, a geographer and eclipse cartographer.

Bluebonnet members will experience a significant partial eclipse that will darken more than 99% of the sun in Bastrop, Lockhart and Caldwell, as well as southeast Hays County and east Travis County. In Giddings, the moon will cover 98.8% of the sun at the point of totality, and in Fayetteville and Brenham, viewers will see a 97.6% eclipse.

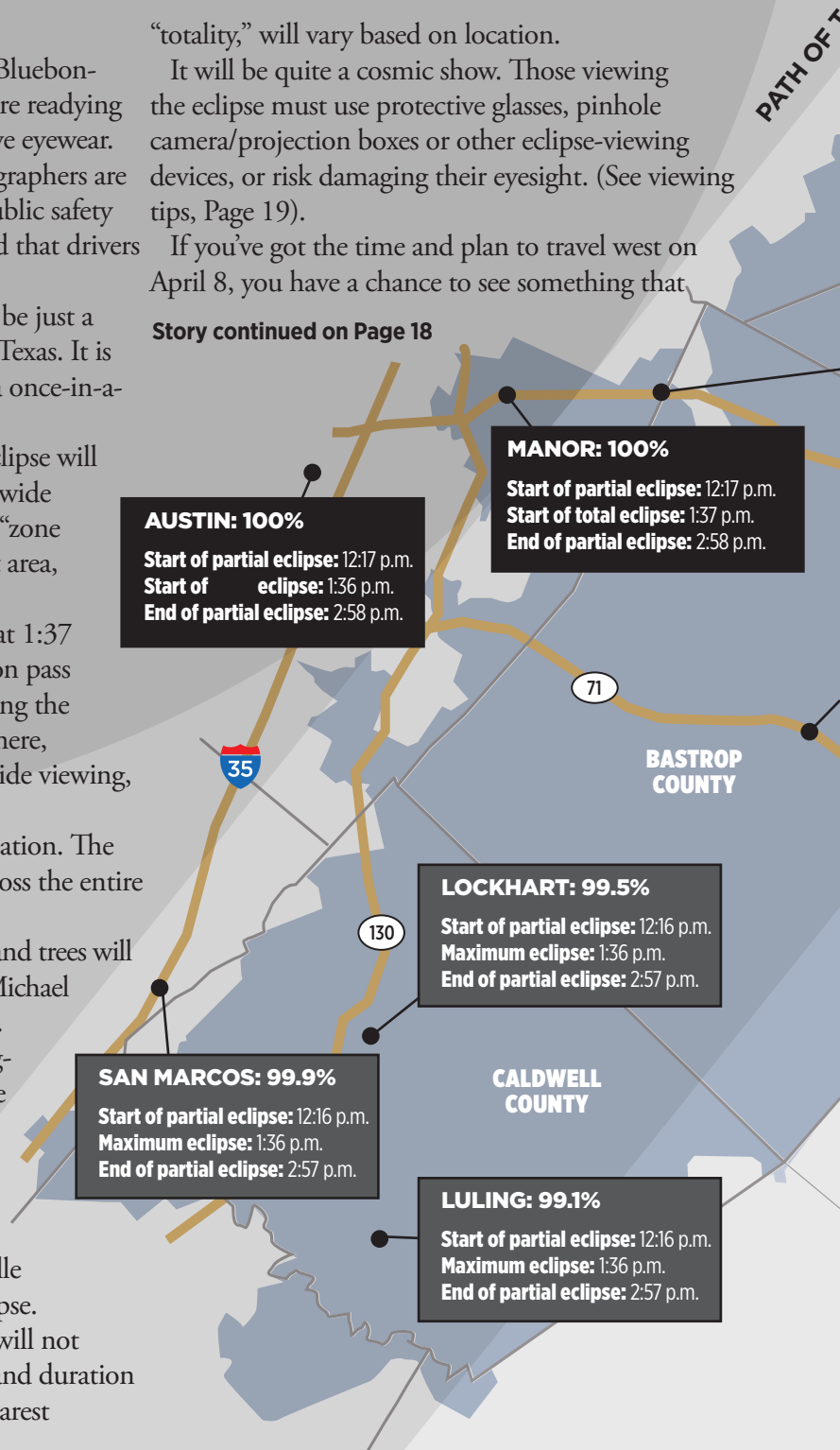
In these areas of partial eclipse, observers will not experience complete darkness. The timing and duration of the partial eclipses, and when they are nearest

“totality,” will vary based on location.

It will be quite a cosmic show. Those viewing the eclipse must use protective glasses, pinhole camera/projection boxes or other eclipse-viewing devices, or risk damaging their eyesight. (See viewing tips, Page 19).

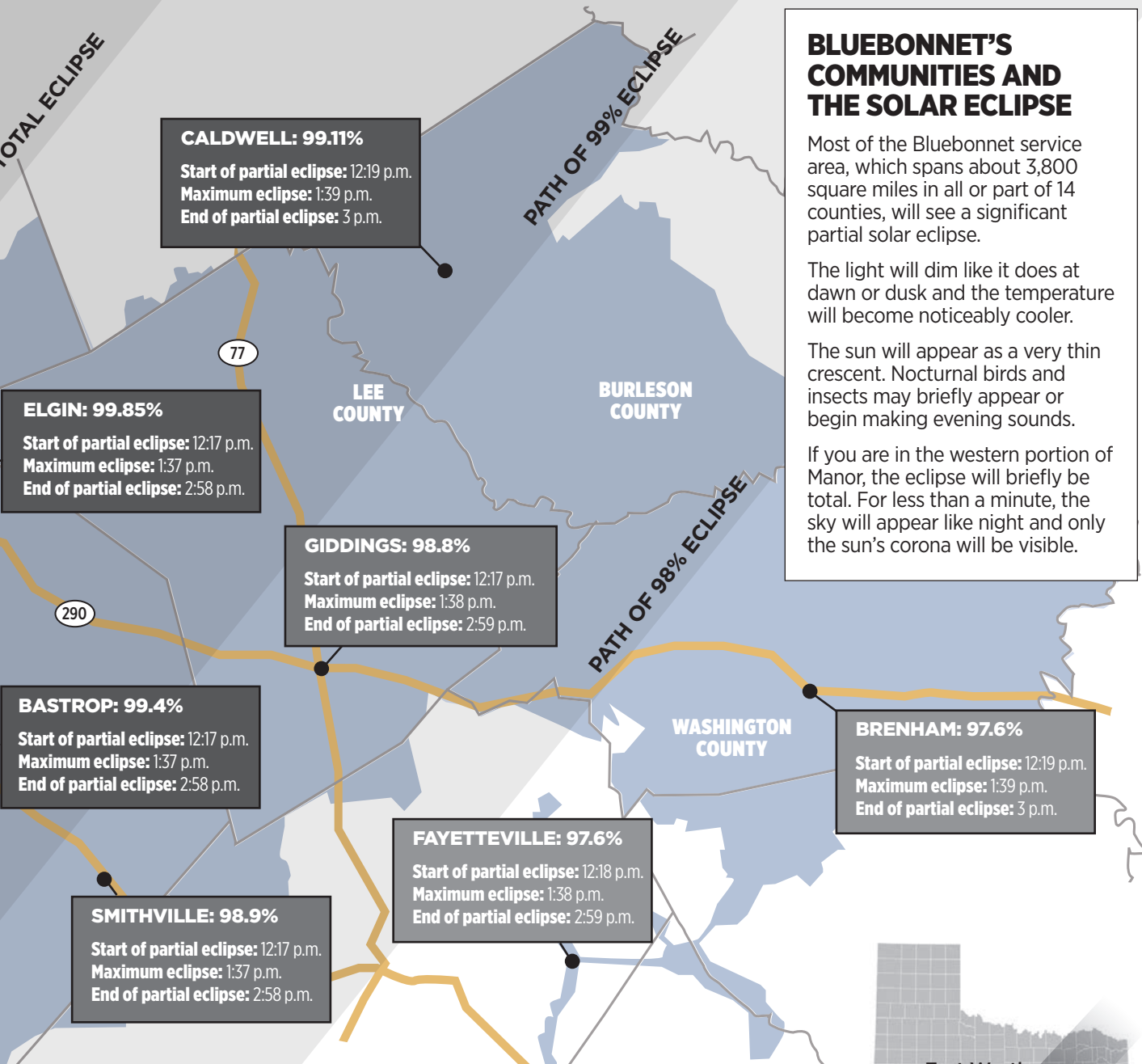
If you've got the time and plan to travel west on April 8, you have a chance to see something that

Story continued on Page 18





SPECTACLE



BLUEBONNET'S COMMUNITIES AND THE SOLAR ECLIPSE

Most of the Bluebonnet service area, which spans about 3,800 square miles in all or part of 14 counties, will see a significant partial solar eclipse.

The light will dim like it does at dawn or dusk and the temperature will become noticeably cooler.

The sun will appear as a very thin crescent. Nocturnal birds and insects may briefly appear or begin making evening sounds.

If you are in the western portion of Manor, the eclipse will briefly be total. For less than a minute, the sky will appear like night and only the sun's corona will be visible.



- The April 8, 2024, total eclipse passes over Texas in about 22 minutes
- Total eclipse begins at the Texas/Mexico border at 1:27 p.m., moves northeast, and leaves Texas at 1:49 p.m.
- Statewide partial eclipse lasts longer, from 12:10-3:06 p.m.
- Most populous area in the path of total eclipse is Dallas/Fort Worth, with about 7 million residents
- 12 million people live within path of total eclipse in Texas, more than any other state in the U.S.

■ = Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative service area

Joe Stafford map; data from greatamericaneclipse.com, eclipsewise.com, timeanddate.com and xjubier.free.fr

Story continued from Page 16

hasn't happened over Central Texas in 627 years — since 1397.

Thousands of residents of Manor's ShadowGlen subdivision and nearby areas will briefly experience the April 8 total eclipse for anywhere from 6 to 43 seconds, starting at 1:37 p.m.

For viewers across the Bluebonnet region, the eclipse begins anywhere from 12:16-12:19 p.m., depending on your location. It gradually grows to its maximum, and then begins to return to normal. It will all be over from 2:57-2:59 p.m.

ShadowGlen resident and Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative member Torvald Hessel is an astrophysicist who has seen many partial solar and lunar eclipses. But he's never been in the area of totality of a solar eclipse.

"I decided that the 2024 eclipse is *mine*," he said, noting that his neighborhood's location in the path of the total eclipse means residents and workers there shouldn't miss it: "It's on your doorstep."

Hessel, an engineering scientist with a master's degree in astrophysics, conducts research at the University of Texas at Austin's Space and Geophysics Lab. He spent a dozen years teaching astronomy at Austin Community College.



Michael Zeiler, geographer and eclipse cartographer, says the next total solar eclipse to come near Central Texas will be in 176 years.

Hessel calculates that his ShadowGlen neighbors in far western Manor will experience a total eclipse lasting 43 seconds. Because it takes time for eyes to adjust to the darkness, seeing the eclipse for only a few seconds likely won't give viewers a chance to spot the corona, Hessel said.

"Forty-three (seconds) is better, obviously, but still short, but you may see a star or two popping out,"

Hessel said.

Zeiler, who also founded the website greatamericaneclipse.com in 2014, said the total eclipse's path "neatly bisects the town of Manor."

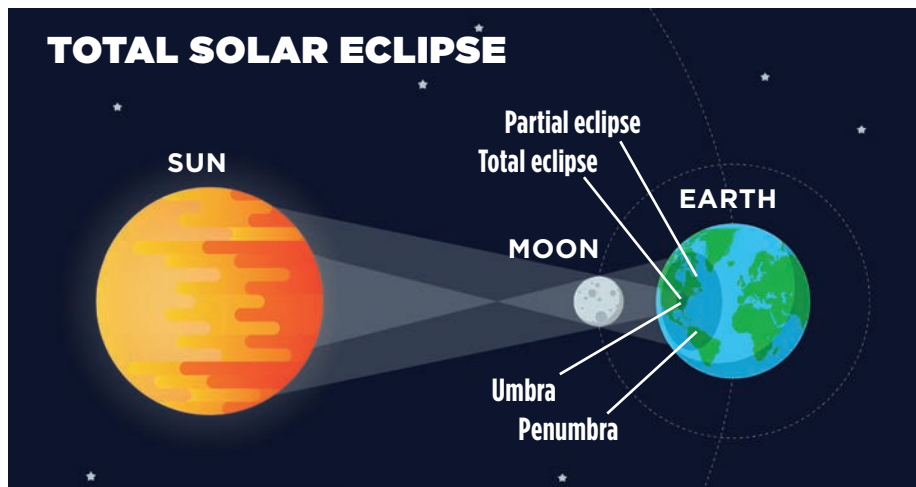
The last total solar eclipse visible over the contiguous United States was Aug. 21, 2017. It lasted just over 2 minutes on a path from the Pacific Northwest to South Carolina.

Viewing the next total eclipse visible over the United States, on Aug. 23, 2044, will require a trip to Montana, North Dakota or South Dakota. On Aug. 12, 2045, another total eclipse will just clip the northeast corner of the Texas Panhandle.

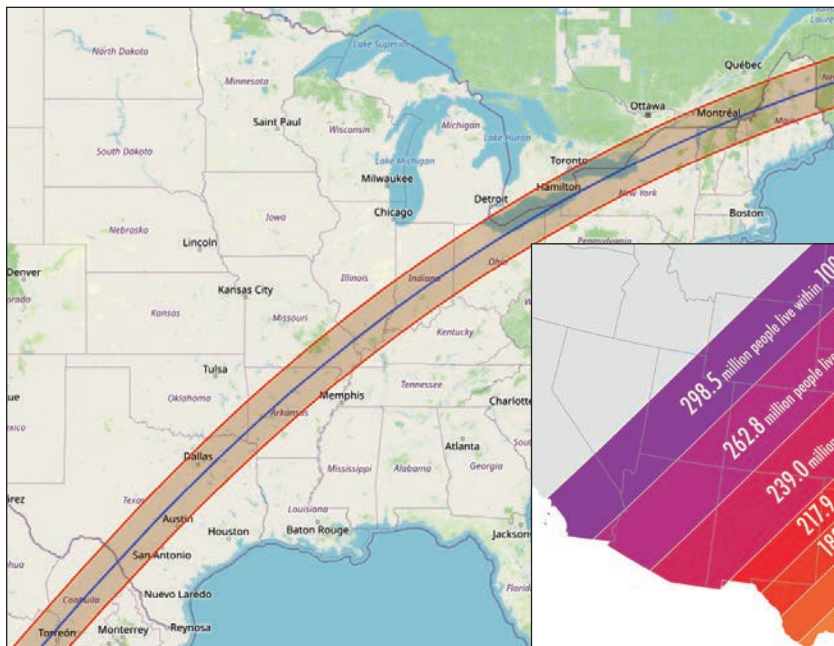
Story continued on Page 20



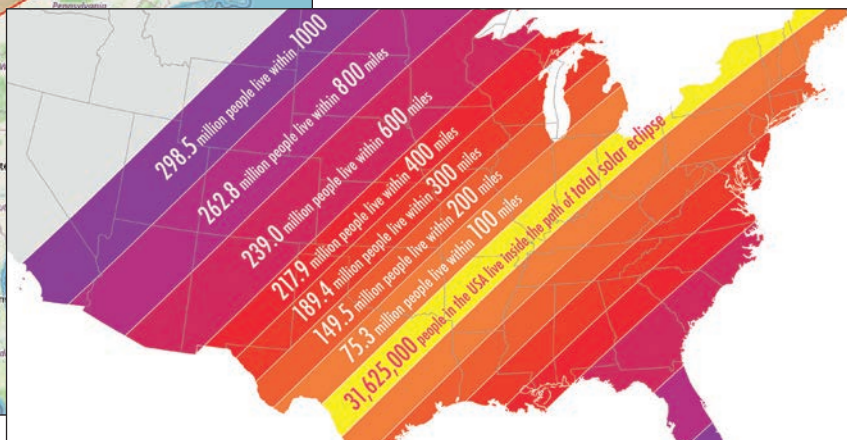
Astrophysicist and astronomy expert Torvald Hessel at his home in the ShadowGlen subdivision of Manor. Hessel stresses the importance of wearing certified, protective glasses while viewing the event. He estimates the eclipse over his neighborhood will last 43 seconds. His T-shirt, featuring Einstein wearing eclipse glasses, speaks to his enthusiasm. It reads 'I am ready for totality! Relatively speaking.' Sarah Beal photo



When the moon eclipses the sun, it produces two types of shadows on Earth. The umbra shadow is relatively small in diameter and is where an observer can see a total eclipse. The penumbra shadow covers the much larger area of partial eclipse. In the penumbra area, the sun is not completely covered by the moon. The majority of the Bluebonnet region will fall within the penumbra, or partial eclipse. Only a portion of the area will experience a total eclipse. Information from National Aeronautics and Space Administration; image from istockphoto



The path of the total eclipse will arc across the Pacific Ocean and central Mexico into Texas, move northeast across the United States into Maine, eastern Canada and then over the Atlantic Ocean. It will be visible to more than 31 million people in the United States. It begins in Texas at 1:27 p.m. and ends in Maine at 3:35 p.m.



Map from eclipse2024.org

Graphic from greatamericaneclipse.com

TIPS ON SAFE ECLIPSE WATCHING

- Do not stare directly at the sun during the eclipse without protective solar lenses! Looking at the sun at any time without protective lenses can damage the retina quickly and permanently.

- The protective lenses must have a certified mandatory rating of ISO 12312-2.

- Supervise children closely to make sure they are using viewers correctly.

- The American Astronomical Society lists recommended manufacturers of glasses or viewers online at eclipse.aas.org/resources/solar-filters. You may also find viewing glasses at Home Depot, Lowe's or Walmart.

SAFE WAYS TO VIEW

1. Eclipse glasses or handheld viewers:

They can be inexpensive paper or plastic glasses or viewers, not sunglasses. Certified glasses or viewers are at least 1,000 times darker than sunglasses. Wear them over eyeglasses; check them for scratches or tears. Put them on before you look at the sun.

2. Pinhole or box projectors:

A pinhole projector is great for children, and can be created as easily as using two pieces of paper, or a colander.



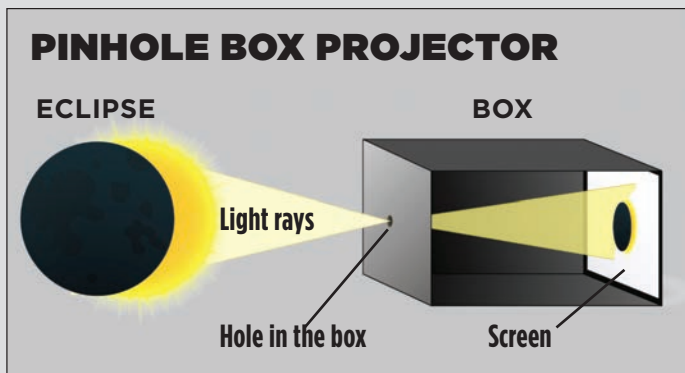
Norah Trahan, 9, at left, and little sister Roslyn Trahan, 4, observed an 'annular' solar eclipse over Central Texas in October 2023. Norah is a student at Brenham's Alton Elementary, and Roslyn will be a student there in the fall. An annular, or 'ring of fire' eclipse, occurs when a smaller shadow of the moon passes between the sun and Earth. Photo courtesy Brenham ISD

Let the sun shine through the pinhole (or the holes of a colander) onto a white piece of paper or surface, then watch the face of the sun disappear and reappear on that surface. A slightly more elaborate but simple box pinhole projector is easy to make: Get directions online or watch NASA's YouTube video at bit.ly/42dvtDC

3. Camera, binocular or telescope lens covers:

You can tape the lens from a pair of solar eclipse glasses over the camera lens of your smartphone. Cameras, binoculars and telescopes require special solar lenses that fit over the lens or front of the devices. Consult an expert on recommended filters for these devices.

Sources: Space.com, [American Academy of Ophthalmology](http://AmericanAcademyofOphthalmology), astronomer [Keely Finkelstein](http://KeelyFinkelstein)



A pinhole box projector is a safe way to experience the eclipse. The pinhole projects an image of light onto a piece of white paper at the back of the box. Image from istockphoto

Story continued from Page 18

“Somewhere on the planet, we usually have a solar eclipse every one or two years — on average about 18 months — but totality is often somewhere that’s not populated, or it’s in the middle of the ocean,” said astronomer Keely Finkelstein, a University of Texas at Austin assistant professor of instruction.

The next time a total solar eclipse is expected to come close to Central Texas will be on April 14, 2200, Zeiler said. That’s about nine generations away.

Claire Hodgkin wants to make sure Manor Independent School District students have a memorable experience next month, however brief. “It’s a unique opportunity for students to experience science in their real lives,” said Hodgkin, the district’s science coordinator. Older students will look through eclipse glasses. Younger students at Manor Elementary Early Learning Center will use pinhole camera (or projector) boxes — because persuading young children to properly wear eclipse glasses is virtually impossible, she said.

LEARNING ABOUT THE ECLIPSE

All of Manor ISD’s 18 schools and its central office will use special Dobsonian telescopes to view the eclipse, Hodgkin said. This inexpensive, user-friendly, relatively easy-to-build telescope is popular with amateur astronomers. A group of students and teachers at Manor New Tech High School built 15 of the telescopes, and Hodgkin will provide more.

In the Lockhart school district, students in science classes across the district’s nine campuses will watch the eclipse through solar glasses. “We hope this hands-on experience inspires our students to dream big, and that it fuels a lifelong passion for science,” said Ty Davidson, Lockhart’s assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

Third-graders in April Zapata’s class at Plum Creek Elementary in the Lockhart ISD had a Zoom conversation with Eliseo Reyes, a flight controller who works with NASA. He talked to students about his work as well as the upcoming eclipse.

Instructors across the Brenham Independent School District are preparing activities to take advantage of the educational opportunities the solar eclipse will offer. Students in science classes will have solar glasses or pinhole viewers to safely view and learn about the eclipse, which will cover 97.6% of the sun in that area. They will also have discussions with teachers, hands-on experiments and interactive simulations.

“By connecting classroom activities to real-world phenomena, we seek to instill a profound sense of curiosity and scientific exploration among our students,” said Brooke Trahan, Brenham ISD’s director of communication and community engagement.



Yazmin Sifuentes, left, Aislina Ledezma Maldonado and Jade Rodriguez Ledezma, third-grade students at Plum Creek Elementary School in the Lockhart Independent School District, are learning about astronomy. The class crafted models of the solar system using pieces of candy to represent planets. Sara Abrego photos



Plum Creek Elementary students reach for the stars in a virtual rendezvous with NASA flight controller Eliseo Reyes, exploring the wonders of solar eclipses and spacecraft mission control during a Zoom meeting in January.

The Houston metro area’s 7 million-plus residents are outside the total eclipse zone, and many of them — as well as others east of the Bluebonnet service area — will travel west through the region. That could snarl area traffic in the days before and after the event.

More than 1 million people might travel within Texas or from elsewhere to see the eclipse, according to Matthew Heinze, Texas Department of Transportation maintenance section manager.

City, county, regional and state govern-

mental agencies responsible for public safety, transportation and tourism have developed plans to handle the crowds, Heinze said.

They sought advice from locations where the 2017 total solar eclipse attracted crowds. “The traffic basically just stopped,” he said. “It was not widespread on every road, but they did have issues with people just stopping to see that.”

On the pre-eclipse weekend, Austin area hotels are expected to be two to three times more full than at the same time last year, according to Visit Austin, a city agency. Ex-

PLANNING A PUBLIC ECLIPSE EVENT?

If you are in the Bluebonnet area and are planning a public solar eclipse-watching event, let us know by emailing socialmedia@bluebonnet.coop. We'll share it with our followers.

edia Group, a travel technology company, says based on bookings, Austin is one of the top destinations in the United States along the path of the eclipse.

MAKE PLANS NOW

If you were thinking about camping overnight in one of the 31 state parks where the total solar eclipse will be visible, you may be too late. Many are already fully reserved.

Central Texans may remember the annular, "ring of fire," eclipse last October, when a smaller shadow of the moon passed between Earth and the sun.

Bluebonnet member Debbie Young loved that partial eclipse, which she saw from her and husband Allen Ambuhl's home in ShadowGlen.

"I'm excited," Young said of the upcoming event. "I've given glasses to some of my family and tried to keep people informed about when it's going to happen and how to view it safely."

Although Young is prepared, Hessel doesn't believe many of his neighbors are aware of what's in store.

"My experience is people wake up the day before the event in a big panic about who is selling glasses because 'I need them right now,'" he said.

Katie Raney supervises a team at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department that educates park visitors year-round. She traveled to view the 2017 total solar eclipse in Nebraska and recalls the spectacle.

"The closer you are to totality, the more your body will notice the change in your environment," she said. "You'll feel cooler air, see a darker sky and sense a different world than the one you were in before the eclipse started."

Of course, whether in the center of the total eclipse or in any part of Bluebonnet's 3,800-square-mile service area, the vagaries of cloud cover loom large.

Hessel isn't staying home for the eclipse. He'll be in Bertram to see a little over 4 minutes of totality. If it's cloudy, he might drive farther.

"I will do my best to find a clear sky," he said. ■



Bastrop member service representatives Katie Weber, left, and Malisa Espinal show off eclipse glasses that will be handed out to members at Bluebonnet's member service centers while supplies last. *Sarah Beal photo*

FREE ECLIPSE GLASSES

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative members can pick up free eclipse viewing glasses, while supplies last, at any of the cooperative's five member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Lockhart, Giddings and Manor. Limit: Two pairs of glasses per member. Member service centers are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Get addresses at bluebonnet.coop/contact-us.

WANT SOME ADVICE?

Thinking about traveling to see the total eclipse? Heed these warnings:

"I really ask for people to have patience. There will no doubt be delays and backups at signals. Everybody be patient."

— Matthew Heinze, maintenance section manager,
Texas Department of Transportation

"Do not come to a state park unless you have a reservation, either camping or for day use. And no matter where you go — to a state park or an event — go early and stay late because of the traffic."

— Katie Raney, field interpretation coordinator,
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

"If you want to go somewhere to see it, you should go on Saturday or Sunday. Don't think you can get up and go to your friend's house that day to watch it, because you'll get caught up in this traffic that's coming."

— Ann Howard, Travis County commissioner, Precinct 3

GET ECLIPSE INFORMATION

■ greatamericaneclipse.com/texas-2024-eclipse

■ eclipsewise.com/2024/2024.html

■ science.nasa.gov/eclipses Click on the red arrow to get details and maps

■ timeanddate.com/eclipse/map/2024-april-8 Click on PathMap; then zoom in on the map to locate your area. Click on your area to see details of the full or partial eclipse; "maximum" time is when the eclipse will be at its peak near you.

Your cooperative, your Annual Meeting

BLUEBONNET ELECTRIC Cooperative's Annual Meeting will be on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at The Silos on 77 in Giddings. Two of the nine seats on the Board of Directors are up for election that day.

One of the benefits of being a Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative member is having a say in cooperative business, including voting on agenda items during the Annual Meeting and for the cooperative's Board of Directors. Board members serve staggered three-year terms. The two seats up for election in 2024 are District 2, Travis County, and District 3, Bastrop County. The deadline to file the required documentation and fees for nomination for candidacy for a seat on the Board was Feb. 14, 2024.

Members can vote for candidates by submitting their proxy form by May 7, or by attending the Annual Meeting in person on May 14.

Proxy forms will be mailed to all Bluebonnet members this month. Proxy voting allows a member to designate either another member, or the Proxy Committee, to vote in his or her place. Bluebonnet's Proxy Committee is composed of all Bluebonnet Board members whose terms are not currently up for election. If a member chooses to assign his or her vote to another member, that member may vote only at the Annual Meeting. Information on how to complete your proxy form may be found at bluebonnet.coop/annualmeeting.

Completed proxy forms must be postmarked or dropped off at any of Bluebonnet's member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart or Manor by 5 p.m. May 7.



A friend claps for a smiling Elizabeth Christian of Paige, who won a Sony 43-inch HDR LED Google TV at last year's Annual Meeting. Last year about 600 members and guests joined the event, which included live music, snacks and a presentation about the co-op. *Sarah Beal photo*

The Silos on 77 is at 1031 County Road 223, south of Giddings. Learn more about Bluebonnet's Annual Meeting, Board of Directors and voting at bluebonnet.coop/annualmeeting, by calling 800-842-7708 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, or by emailing memberservices@bluebonnet.coop. Look for more information in Bluebonnet's April issue of Texas Co-op Power magazine.

Grant supports Winchester area community center

BLUEBONNET ELECTRIC Cooperative and the Lower Colorado River Authority recently provided a grant to a community center as a part of LCRA's Community Development Partnership Program. Bluebonnet, one of LCRA's wholesale electric customers, is a partner in the grant program that supports the co-

op's members and the communities it serves. Applications for the upcoming round of grants will be accepted through July. Get more information about the program and a link to an application, when available, at lcra.org/cdpp.

A \$10,000 grant from Bluebonnet and LCRA will help the Winchester Area Civic Association upgrade Zilss Memorial Hall to become ADA-compliant. The grant, along with \$4,238 in matching funds, will pay for an upgraded air-conditioning system, new refrigerator and bathroom renovations at the Fayette County facility. Pictured, front row from left, are Ellen Brumback, association secretary; Barb Schafer, association member; Margaret D. "Meg" Voelter, LCRA board member; Byron Balke, Bluebonnet Board assistant secretary/treasurer; and Dinah Breeden, association vice chairman. Second row, from left, are Margaret Atkins, association treasurer, and Michele Weth, association member. Third row, from left, are Rhoda Gersch, association member; Pat Karisch, association past president; Bill Karisch, association member; Sherry Murphy, Bluebonnet Giddings-area community representative; and Liz Wallace, association member. Back row, from left, are Nicolette Morrison, association president; Sherwood Gersch, association member; Kate Ramzinski, LCRA regional affairs representative; Russell Jurk, Bluebonnet Board member; Richard Schafer, association member and co-project manager of renovation; Matthew L. "Matt" Arthur, LCRA board member; and Tom Atkins, association member and co-project manager of renovation.



LCRA photo

that was **THEN**

Before computers, databases and mobile apps, there were index cards. Every Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative member's information was recorded on 4-by-6-inch pieces of paper. From membership certificates to payment records, a member's history with Bluebonnet was on one of those cards. Payments were mailed, and employees opened envelopes by hand, processing one payment at a time.



this is **NOW**

Today, with just a quick search and a few clicks of a computer keyboard, a member's information is at the fingertips of a member service representative.

Paper is the past, and today's member services and billing specialists work with automated systems to ensure payments are recorded. More than 70% of Bluebonnet members use self-service options, online or by phone, to pay bills or request service. A member service representative's role has changed with increasing numbers of members, improved technology and many self-service options. Bluebonnet's commitment to its members, however, remains as strong as ever.



Top: Bluebonnet office employees worked with paper to handle member account information and process payments in the 1970s.
Above: Brittany Machinsky, a member service representative working in Giddings, uses a computer to take care of member business today.

In 2024, Bluebonnet celebrates 85 years of providing safe, reliable and affordable electric service to its fast-growing membership. Throughout the year, join us in celebrating this milestone as we honor our past and plan for the future.



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A Revere of Our Own

Young Katy Jennings raced bareback to alert her fellow Texians about the advancing Mexican army

BY MARTHA DEERINGER • ILLUSTRATION BY KATE GLEYZER

PAUL REVERE wasn't the only patriot who made a courageous ride to warn of approaching danger. In 1836, Katy Jennings rode west from her home in Bastrop to the tiny town of Waterloo (known today as Austin) to alert Texians that the Mexican army was coming and they should run for their lives.

Katy was 10 years old.

Her father, Gordon C. Jennings, was a farmer who moved his family from Missouri to Bastrop in 1833. Gordon enlisted in the Texas militia, encouraged by the promise of a land grant as compensation. He served at the Alamo as a cannoneer, probably manning artillery positions on the north wall. When the

Alamo fell to Gen. Antonio López de Santa Anna's army on March 6, 1836, Gordon, 53, was the oldest Alamo defender to die.

Author Mary Jean Kelso, a direct descendent of Katy's brother Samuel—Kelso's great-grandfather—wrote a book about her family, *A Visual History Record of Alamo Defender Gordon Cartwright Jennings' Family*. (Kelso spells her name Katy, but a newspaper obituary called her Katie.)

When word of the Alamo reached Bastrop, most families fled east in a panicked exodus known as the Runaway Scrape. But Gordon's wife, Catherine, and a few of her neighbors stood their ground until

a division of the Mexican army reached the Colorado River at Bastrop.

With no choice but to flee, Catherine, her three children and two stepsons threw their most valuable possessions into a wagon. Then Catherine boosted daughter Katy onto a horse bareback and sent her west to warn others that Mexican soldiers were nipping at their heels. She told Katy not to return to Bastrop because the family would be gone.

Katy was instructed to join another family when she arrived in Waterloo, and the Jennings clan would meet again in a refugee camp along the Trinity River in East Texas.

Clinging to her horse's mane, Kelso writes, Katy rode west at "great speed" for 40 miles, warning settlers along the way. Somehow she found her way back to her family after the Battle of San Jacinto on April 21, 1836, and was with them when they returned to Bastrop.

"According to family stories," Kelso says, "after the Texas Revolution, Katy married Casper Whistler, but the marriage was short lived. Whistler was scalped by Indians while Katy, who had gone to fetch water, hid in a creek bed."

Katy later married a second time, to Sylvester Lockwood, a Texas pioneer. The couple lived near Manor in Travis County for 65 years. According to her 1911 obituary, Katy had eight children, 42 grandchildren, 100 great-grandchildren and 10 great-great grandchildren when she died at the age of 85.

She's still remembered for her famous bareback ride.

"Some people may have called 10-year-old Katy Jennings brave or foolhardy," Kelso says. "Texas calls her a hero." ■

Best Brunch

Savory or sweet, don't oversleep this weekend meal

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Nothing makes this gal happier than brunch. Good friends, amazing food and music in the background is my forever Sunday mood. Breakfast tostadas are so easy to prepare, and a mini version of anything is always greeted with a "wow!"

Mini Breakfast Tostadas

12 mini or street taco corn tortillas
3 tablespoons olive oil, divided use
6 eggs
4 teaspoons milk
2 teaspoons salt
1 teaspoon ground black pepper
2 cups refried beans, warmed
Pico de gallo or salsa

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place tortillas on a baking sheet and lightly brush tortillas with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Bake until crisp, about 10 minutes.
2. In a bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper.
3. Add remaining 1 tablespoon oil (or you can use 1 tablespoon butter) to a skillet over medium-high heat. Pour in eggs and cook until scrambled. Remove from heat.
4. Spread beans over tostadas, spoon eggs over beans and top with pico de gallo or salsa.

MAKES 12 TOSTADAS

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at sweetlifebake.com, where she features a recipe for Honey Flan.





Sausage in Puff Pastry

PENNY SENGLER
GVEC

Ready in under 30 minutes, this recipe is hands-down the ultimate addition to your brunch spread, and it might be even better the next morning for a go-to breakfast.

- 1 package frozen puff pastry (17.3 ounces), thawed**
- ¼ cup spicy brown, Dijon or whole grain mustard**
- 1 pound ground breakfast sausage**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. On a cutting board, unfold the two pastry sheets. Slice pastry into thirds along the folds. Slice each third in half to make 12 rectangles. Spread a thin layer of mustard onto each pastry section.
3. Divide breakfast sausage into 12 small balls, then roll each ball into a finger-size log. Place sausage log onto end of pastry rectangle and roll it up into pastry.
4. Place sausage rolls onto parchment-lined baking sheet. Slice two small slits across the top of each roll. Brush with egg.
5. Bake 20–25 minutes or until golden brown. Allow sausage rolls to rest 7–10 minutes before serving.

MAKES 12

[MORE RECIPES >](#)

\$500 WINNER

Blueberry French Toast With Blueberry Syrup

RUTH FILZ
NUECES EC



Planning on a crowd for brunch? This heavenly French toast has you covered. No need to individually cook slice after slice—this deliciousness bakes in the oven. It can be assembled the night before and refrigerated overnight so the bread can absorb the flavorful eggy mixture. The lightly sweet, perfectly creamy goodness is worth every calorie.

SERVES 10



- 12 slices day-old bread**
- 1 package cream cheese (8 ounces)**
- 2 cups blueberries, divided use**
- 2 eggs**
- 2 cups milk**
- ½ cup maple syrup or honey**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- 1 cup water**
- 1 tablespoon (½ stick) butter**

1. Coat a 9-by-13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. Cut bread into 1-inch cubes and place half of them into pan.
2. Cut cream cheese into ½-inch cubes and place on top of cubed bread. Top with 1 cup blueberries and then remaining half of bread cubes.
3. In a large bowl, beat together eggs, milk, and maple syrup or honey. Pour over bread mixture. Cover and chill in fridge 8 hours or overnight. Remove from fridge 30 minutes before baking.
4. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake covered for 30 minutes, then uncover and bake an additional 30 minutes, or until center of French toast is set.
5. In a saucepan combine sugar, cornstarch and water. Bring to a boil, then stir constantly for 3 minutes. Stir in remaining 1 cup blueberries.
6. Reduce heat. Simmer 8–10 minutes, or until berries burst. Remove from heat and stir in butter. Serve warm over blueberry French toast.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

PARTY DRINKS DUE MARCH 10

Summer soirees call for a festive frosty drink. Send us your best punch, mocktail and cocktail recipes for a shot at \$500. Go online and submit your favorite by March 10.





Breakfast Strata

DIANE HUNLEY
PEDERNALES EC

A strata is my idea of the perfect brunch. This is prepped the night before so it's ready for the oven the next day.

- 1 pound spicy breakfast sausage**
- ½ pound diced bacon**
- 4 eggs**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- ½ teaspoon dry mustard**

- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- 2 cups milk**
- 6 slices wheat or white bread, cubed**
- 8 ounces grated cheddar cheese**

- 1.** Coat a 9-by-13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray.
- 2.** In a skillet over medium-high heat, cook sausage, breaking it up with a spoon until fully done. Remove sausage from skillet, add diced bacon and cook until crispy. Remove from skillet.
- 3.** In a bowl, whisk together eggs, salt, pepper, mustard, Worcestershire sauce and milk.
- 4.** Layer bread, sausage, bacon and cheese in the pan. Pour the egg mixture over the entire casserole. Using a spoon, press down to ensure that all ingredients are submerged. Cover and place in fridge overnight.
- 5.** Remove dish from fridge. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Bake, covered, 1 hour or until firm in center. Allow to cool for 10 minutes before serving.

SERVES 8

Make Brunch a Breeze

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

A small, intimate group is the way to go. Plan accordingly for your space.

Make the morning about mingling. Assemble dishes the night before. Casseroles, quiches, stratas and fruit salads are perfect for this.

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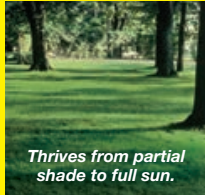
No weeding means no costly chemicals. Amazoy Zoysia lawns naturally resist insects, so you'll save money, while helping to protect the environment. Never expose your family and pets to weed killers and pesticide poison.

4 FOR SLOPES, PLAY AREAS, BARE SPOTS AND PARTIAL SHADE

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750	+150	6	\$ 72.50	\$32.50	29%
1100	+400	10	\$110.00	\$47.50	36%
2000	+1000	20	\$185.00	\$75.00	47%
3000	+1500	30	\$245.00	\$90.00	55%

Super Plugs Precut plugs 3 inches by 3 inches **READY TO PLANT** Packed in trays of 15 Super Plugs. Plant minimum 1 plug per 4 sq. ft.

Super Plugs	Free Plugs	Tray	Your PRICE	+Shipping	SAVINGS
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COURTESY CHET GARNER

Doing Time

Brown County's history museum lets visitors lock into law and order

BY CHET GARNER

ONCE WAS in Europe and wondered, "Why don't we build more castles in Texas?"

But I was oblivious to the fact that there are already castles all around us in the form of historic courthouses and jails. That's especially true in Brown County, where the old jail looks more like a medieval fortress than a place to dive into history.

I started my time-traveling adventure across the street from the jail at the Brown County Museum of History. From woolly mammoth bones to frontier homes, this collection covers every era of this corner of Texas between Abilene and Austin. I sat around the (fake) campfire inside a full-sized Comanche dwelling. I learned that Gilligan (aka Bob Denver) was raised in Brownwood. I also got hands-on lessons because this museum actually encourages visitors to touch the artifacts.

Most amazing was the story of Camp Bowie, which was one of the largest army training camps in the U.S. during World War II, bringing more than a quarter-million troops to Brownwood.

Things got especially interesting, and spooky, when I crossed the street and stepped inside the old jail. This lockup opened in 1903 and served Brown County until the 1980s. The smell of stone and rusted metal permeates every room. The ground floor, which was once the sheriff's private residence, is now an incredible museum about Texas rule of law and includes stories of famous outlaws and jailbreaks.

Upstairs is where things got even creepier as I explored three floors of metal cells with heavy iron doors. I unknowingly stepped across the drop floor for the old gallows, which luckily didn't spring open. If I was plotting a crime 100 years ago in Brown County, this simple tour would have quickly cured me of any ill intent. ■

ABOVE The old county jail in Brownwood doesn't escape Chet's attention.

TCP Join Chet's captivating visit to Brownwood in 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.

MARCH

07

Austin Lakeway Garden Club Spring Mixer, (512) 263-2885, lakewaygardenclub.com

Denton [7-10] Texas Storytelling Festival, (940) 380-9320, tejasstorytelling.com

Irving [7-10] Texas Steel Guitar Jamboree, (817) 558-3481, texassteelguitar.org

08

Corsicana An Evening with Amy Grant, (903) 874-7792, corsicanapalace.com

09

Luling Rajun' Cajun Throwdown and Gunbo Cookoff, (830) 875-3214, lulingmainstreet.com

McKinney [9-10] Heard Museum Family Campout, (972) 562-5566, heardmuseum.org

14

Dublin [14-16] St. Patrick's Day, (254) 300-6263, dublintxchamber.com

15

Round Top [15-16] Pioneer Unit of Herb Society of America Plant and Gift Sale, (713) 503-9981, herbsocietypioneer.org

Tolar [15-16] Ceramic Expo and Handcrafted Items, (254) 716-5227, westceramicshow.com

22

Georgetown [22-23] Star Struck: Georgetown Quilt Show, (512) 869-1812, handcraftsunlimited.com

Burton [22-30] La Bahia Antique Show, (979) 289-2684, labahiaantiques.com

23

Brenham Mark Lowry with the Sound and Endless Highway, (979) 337-7240, thebarnhillcenter.com

Huntsville Herb Festival at the Wynne Home, (936) 891-5024, texasthymeunit.org

25

Johnson City [25-April 19] Wine and Wildflower Journey, (872) 216-9463, texashillcountrywineries.org

30

Burnet Hill Country Lawn & Garden Show, (512) 756-3059, burnetcountyhighlandlakesmastergardener.org

Sabinal [30-31] Wild Hog Festival and Craft Fair, (830) 486-8549, sabinalwildhogfestival.com

APRIL

02

Corsicana [2-4] Janet's Planet, (903) 872-5411, navarrocouncilofthearts.com

05

Dimmitt [5-6] Ogallala Quilters' Society Quilt Festival, ogallalaquilters.org

Luling [5-6] Roughneck Chili and BBQ Cook-Off, (830) 875-1922, lulingoilmuseum.org

Kerrville [5-7] Texas Lions Camp Eclipse Celebration, (830) 896-8500, kerrvilletexascvb.com

06

Quitman [6-8] Northeast Texas Eclipsefest, netxeclipsefest.com

TCP Submit Your Event

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



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Guatemala, Tikal & Rio Dulce	8	995
Mexico's Colonial Heritage	8	995
Mexico's Ancient Civilizations	9	995
Mexico's Copper Canyon	8	1295
Dominican Republic	8	TBA
Belize & Ambergris Caye	8	1295

USA & Canada Tours	Days	Price
Grand Canyon, Bryce & Zion	8	1795
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Architecture

From modest to magnificent, architecture old and new is used for housing, education, entertainment and more. These structures surround, engage and inspire Texans to even greater heights. This month we appreciate designs found right here in the Lone Star state.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 SUMMER EVERILL
PEDERNALES EC

A new installation at the Blanton Museum of Art in Austin.

2 CAROLYN WILLIAMS
COSERV

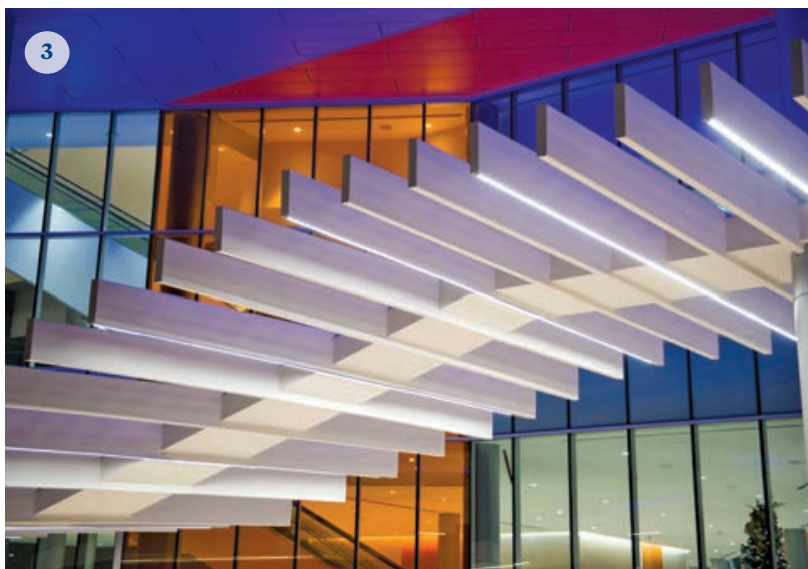
"While exploring senior photo locations, I had heard that this University of North Texas pedestrian bridge was a wonder. As I got up to the edge, the sun and clouds created these amazing shadows."

3 MARK MCCLENDON
BANDERA EC

The Henry B. González Convention Center in San Antonio.

4 TOM BRENTS
FAYETTE EC

The Ashbel Smith Building, also known as Old Red, is a Romanesque Revival-style structure in Galveston. Built in 1890 with red brick and sandstone, it survived the great 1900 hurricane and 2008's Hurricane Ike.



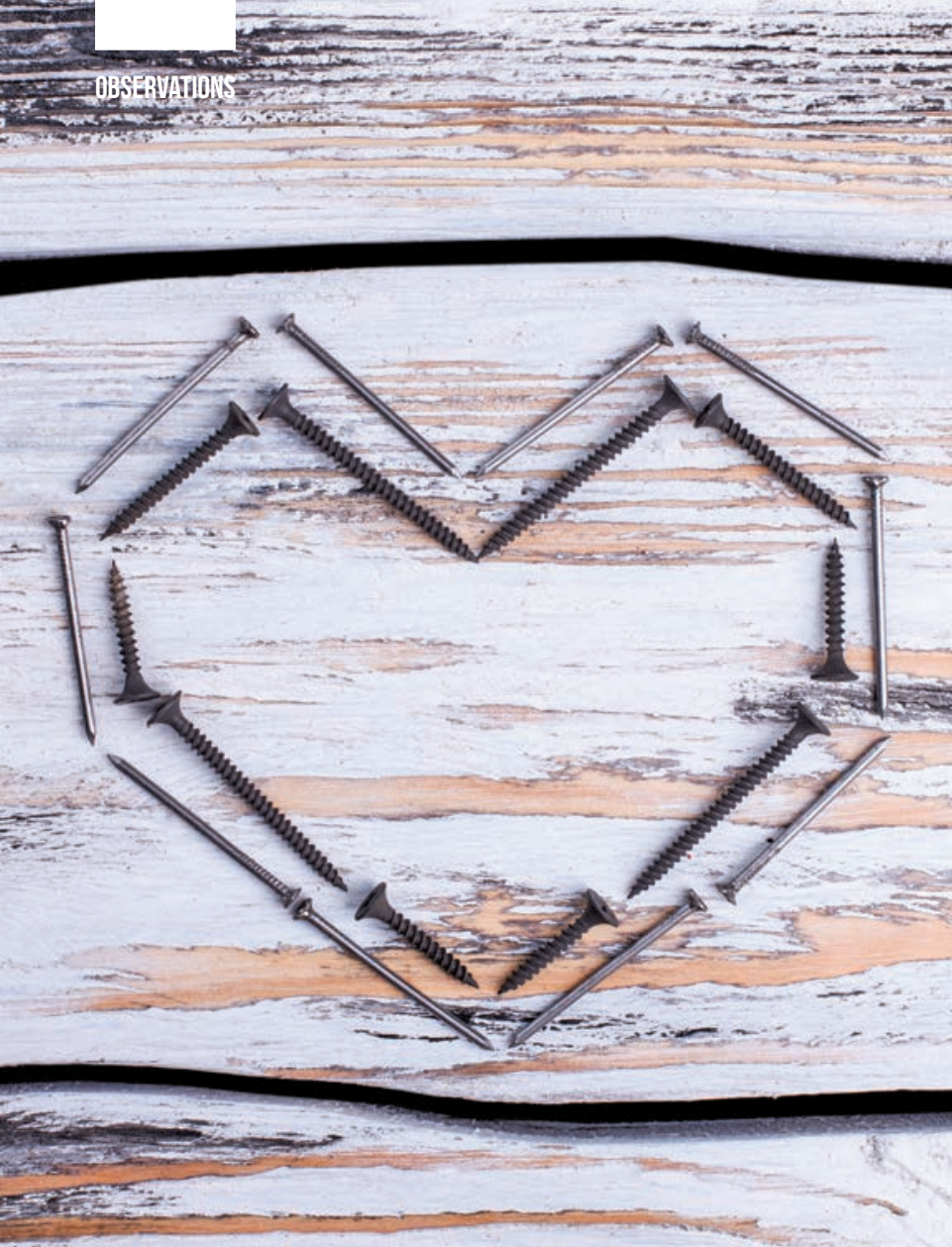
Upcoming Contests

- DUE MAR 10** Shells and Scales
- DUE APR 10** Textures
- DUE MAY 10** Parenthood



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



It Takes a Family

When all seems lost,
loved ones rebuild a life

BY DALE ROBERSON

SOMETIMES IT TAKES a tragedy to bring a family and friends together. I know. It happened to me.

My children were scattered to the four winds. Kathy in New Braunfels, Pat and Vicki in Denton; Shannon had settled in Richmond, Virginia. Kalli and Tony were in Little Elm. We weren't estranged, just widely spread.

Since retirement, I hadn't kept up with several friends.

The tragedy occurred in the middle of the night November 18, 2018, when my house outside Driftwood caught fire. I escaped with one night in the hospital. My wife, Joyce, died in the blaze.

Not only did I lose my wife of 41 years, I was left with only the pajamas I had on. I didn't even have shoes.

That was when family and friends re-

grouped to help put my life back together.

Kathy took me to her house to stay until I devised a plan.

Tim McKenzie, whose late father had been a friend, called to offer an unoccupied apartment he owned.

Everyone came together to solve my problems.

As a newspaper editor, I had written about businessman Tracey Dean, then president of the Wimberley school board. When Tracey heard about my misfortune, he appeared with a sizeable check from members of his church. Then he arranged a line of credit for building materials at McCoy's and hired a carpenter to help me rebuild.

My granddaughter, Bethany Kraft, set up a GoFundMe to raise money. Friends I hadn't seen in some time mailed personal checks with condolences.

Granddaughters Melissa Niland and Rachel Nielsen helped set up the apartment as friends contributed furniture and clothing. Tim and grandson-in-law Brian Nielsen cleared cedar and built a pad for a foundation.

We purchased an unfinished 16-by-40-foot building as my future home. With much help and my building skills, we finished the inside to my design. Grandchildren as young as 5-year-old McKinley, 12-year-old Ned and teen Chase contributed. Grandson Cliff Roberson, a professional electrician, provided lights and power. Pat hung a storm door and installed cabinet shelves while Vicki, my daughter-in-law, joined the girls.

My former wife Vicki and her friend Joe nailed down the oak flooring furnished by Tracey from a remodeling job he'd done.

Now—thanks to all their love and efforts—I'm settled and happy in my new home. It's been said that it takes a village. A tragedy can prove what it really takes is family and friends. ■



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