

YOU ARE INVITED TO
NUECES ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S

2023 85TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Nueces Electric Cooperative

Energizing
Your Future

SEE OUR 2022 ANNUAL REPORT INSIDE

THURSDAY
OCTOBER 12TH, 2023

5:30PM DOORS OPEN
7:00PM MEETING

RICHARD M BORCHARD REGIONAL FAIRGROUNDS
1213 TERRY SHAMSIE BLVD, ROBSTOWN TX

REGISTRATION CARD

PLEASE TEAR ALONG THE LINE
ABOVE.

SIGN THE BACK AND BRING THIS
CARD TO THE ANNUAL MEETING
TO RECEIVE A \$10 BILL CREDIT!



September 15, 2023

Dear Nueces Electric Cooperative member,
This is your official notice that the 2023 Annual Meeting of Nueces Electric Cooperative will be on Thursday, October 12, 2023, for the purpose of electing directors, presentation of reports covering the 2022 fiscal year, and transaction of other business.

Notice is further given that three incumbent directors (one from District 1, 2, and 4) will be elected by acclamation as we have an uncontested election.

There will be no voting this year.

This information is provided to you pursuant to the NEC Bylaws: Article I - §1; Article III - §1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; Article IV - §2, 3, 5. A full copy of the NEC Bylaws is available online at www.nueceselectric.org under Transparency & Your Cooperative. A copy may be obtained by contacting NEC by phone at 1-800-632-9288 or visit our office at 14353 Cooperative Ave, Robstown TX 78380.

Highlights of the annual financial audit are included in this magazine in the annual report. Members can access the full audit at www.nueceselectric.org under Transparency & Your Cooperative.

Sincerely,



David Rosse, Secretary-Treasurer
Nueces Electric Cooperative



If you are attending the annual meeting and need assistance, please contact Albert Garza at 1-800-NEC-WATT.

- Sign Language Interpreter
- Spanish speaking only
- Assistance from vehicle

Please call by October 7th

Si asiste a la reunión anual y necesita ayuda, comuníquese con Albert Garza al 1-800-NEC-WATT.

- Intérprete de lenguaje de señas
- Solo para hablar español
- Asistencia del vehículo

Por favor llame antes del 7 de octubre

REGISTRATION CARD

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023
REGISTRATION & DINNER @ 5:30-7PM
MEETING @ 7PM
RICHARD M. BORCHARD REGIONAL FAIRGROUNDS
ROBSTOWN TX 78380

SIGNATURE

PRINT

TARJETA DE REGISTRO

JUEVES, 12 DE OCTUBRE DE 2023
REGISTRO Y CENA @ 5:30-7PM
REUNIÓN @ 7PM
RICHARD M. BORCHARD REGIONAL FAIRGROUNDS
ROBSTOWN TX 78380

FIRMA

IMPRIMIR

SCIENCE STUDENTS
REACH GREAT HEIGHTS

PRAISE FOR A TEXAS NOVEL
NEVER RUNS DRY

KINDNESS VISITS
A TINY CHAPEL

Texas Coop Power

FOR NUECES EC MEMBERS

OCTOBER 2023

Still Grabbing Glory

Senior rodeo competitors' pride
'just won't let them be old yet'





gdefy®

EXPERIENCE THE

Miracle



PATENTED
VERSOSHOCK®
SHOCK ABSORPTION
TECHNOLOGY

"After suffering with extreme foot pain for months, I can finally walk again with no pain. **They are truly miracle shoes!**" – Carol D.

See more miracle testimonials at gdefy.com

Enjoy the benefits of exercise without harmful impact on your joints!

- ✓ Renewed Energy
- ✓ Improved Posture
- ✓ Maximum Protection
- ✓ Relieve Pain

60-DAY "TRY DEFY" MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE!

ENERGIYA \$160 MED/WIDE/X-WIDE AVAILABLE

This product is not intended to treat, cure or prevent any disease.

Women



TB9037FBL
Black

TB9037FMA
Mauve

TB9037FUO
Blue/Orange

Men



TB9037MBL
Black

TB9037MGP
Gray/Purple

TB9037MWG
White/Gray

\$30 OFF orders of \$150 or more

Promo Code **MQ8KQT5**

Expires December 31, 2023

FREE SHIPPING, EXCHANGES & RETURNS

800-429-0039 · www.gdefy.com

Plus Free Corrective Fit Orthotics
for plantar fasciitis, stability & support!



VersoShock® U.S Patent #US8,555,526 B2. \$30 off applies to orders of \$150 or more. Cannot be combined with other offers. Free shipping on orders over \$50. Free Corrective Fit orthotics not included with sandal purchase. Additional sales taxes may apply. Shoes must be returned within 60 days in like-new condition for full refund or exchange. Credit card authorization required. See website for complete details.

October 2023



06

It's Rocket Science (And so Much More)

High school students learn to problem-solve by building giant, powerful rockets.

*Story by Mark Wangrin
Photos by Scott Van Osdol*

ON THE COVER
The 88-year-old hands of Jimmy Tobolka await their next chance to rope a calf.
Photo by Julia Robinson

ABOVE
Time for McGregor's rocket class to learn whether all its hard work will fly.
Photo by Scott Van Osdol

10 Still in the Saddle Again

Calf roping at 80? Competition—and camaraderie—have no upper limits in the senior rodeo circuit.

Story and photos by Julia Robinson

04

Currents
The latest buzz

05

TCP Talk
Readers respond

16

Co-op News
Information plus energy and safety tips from your cooperative

25

Footnotes in Texas History
It Still Reigns
By W.F. Strong

26

TCP Kitchen
Beans
By Vianney Rodriguez

30

Hit the Road
Puffy Taco Trailblazer
By Chet Garner

33

Focus on Texas
Photo Contest: Helping Out

34

Observations
Noteworthy Grace
By Spike Gillespie



‘The Right Thing To Do’

SHORTLY AFTER Mark and Cheryl Brown bought 200 acres near Ammannsville, halfway between Houston and San Antonio, they turned to conservation.

They gave their land a break from grazing, worked on grassland restoration and began networking with fellow landowners on the benefits of habitat management.

“Changing that mindset where people want to be a part of the land rather than dominate the land—it just seems like the right thing to do,” says Mark, a member of Fayette Electric Cooperative.

It’s been rewarding—for Mother Nature and the Browns.

More than 250 species of native plants thrive on their land, as do bird species with dwindling populations. And in May, the Browns received the Leopold Conservation Award—the state’s highest honor for private land conservation—for their prairieland restoration and community outreach.



Concern for Community

Texas electric cooperatives donated nearly \$750,000 to at least 360 volunteer fire departments across the state in 2022. We celebrate that community involvement during October, which is National Co-op Month.

TCP Contests and More

ENTER CONTESTS AT
TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM



\$500 RECIPE CONTEST
Best Brunch

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Vibrant Color

CAST-IRON GIVEAWAY
We’re giving away heirloom-quality cookware from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co. Enter online now to win.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I collect ...

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 August prompt: **Back to school means ...**

Making new memories with my best friends, getting to meet new people, learning and experiencing new things.

ELVIRA PULIDO
MAGIC VALLEY EC
MISSION

An uninterrupted second cup of coffee.

PHYLLIS SUTTLE
MIDSOUTH EC
IOLA

New shoes, cooler weather and FOOTBALL!

MIKE WEBER
UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES
GRANBURY

Mother buying each of us boys two pair of Levi’s blue jeans for the new school year. (We used them as work jeans at the farm the following summer.)

MANUEL G. TREVIÑO
MEDINA EC
PEARSALL

Visit our website to see more responses.

AUGUST 2023 Charming the Alamo

“There’s a new Alamo cat? Ruby is my favorite part of Alamo history, so good to see they’re continuing the tradition.”

CINDER SCOTT
VIA FACEBOOK



STEPHANIE DALTON COWAN

Good To Hear

Thank you for the audio about Larry McMurtry in *A Page of the Past* [August 2023]. It was much easier and enjoyable to listen to the story than to try to read the small print with my old eyes of 75 years.

Becky Parks
Bluebonnet EC
Maxwell

A Long and Winding Labyrinth

About 20 years ago, my husband built a labyrinth on top of a hill on our 17-acre hobby farm west of Trent [*Circles of Life*, August 2023]. He integrated it into the natural landscape of the hill, resulting in a multilevel path.

The entire labyrinth is approximately a mile walk. At the time it was built, we were told it was the largest one in North America. Visitors can reach us at dancingwithherbs@gmail.com.

Cyndi Hughs
Taylor EC
Trent



LAURA JENKINS

In Defense of Mockingbirds

The mockingbird was chosen by the Legislature to be the state bird of Texas in 1927—chosen because of its courage to protect its home and family even in the face of death [TCP Talk, August 2023]. It stands tall without fear to protect its brood, much like those who fought for Texas independence. That’s why it was chosen.

We have witnessed the mockingbird attacking snakes and hawks. It would serve us all well to take note of the parenting skills, courage and intelligence of these awesome birds.

Tim and Tammy Layman
Coleman County EC
Ballinger

Legislators in 1927 described the mockingbird as “a fighter for the protection of his home, falling if need be, in its defense, like any true Texan.” Need any more be said?

David Snipes
HILCO EC
Aquilla

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.

 Texas Co-op Power

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair Neil Hesse, Muenster

Vice Chair Avan Irani, Robstown

Secretary-Treasurer Bryan Wood, San Augustine

Board Members Dale Ancell, Lubbock
Mark McClain, Roby • Julie Parsley, Johnson City • Brandon Young, McGregor

PRESIDENT/CEO Mike Williams, Austin

COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE

Mike Ables, Bellville • Matt Bentke, Bastrop
Marty Haught, Burleson • Gary Miller, Bryan
Zac Perkins, Hooker, Oklahoma
John Ed Shinpaugh, Bonham
Rob Walker, Gilmer • Buff Whitten, Eldorado

MAGAZINE STAFF

Vice President, Communications & Member Services Martin Bevins

Editor Chris Burrows

Associate Editor Tom Widlowski

Production Manager Karen Nejtke

Creative Manager Andy Dougthy

Advertising Manager Elaine Sproull

Communications Specialist Jéden Clark

Communications Specialist Alex Dal Santo

Print Production Specialist Grace Fultz

Digital Media Specialist Caytlyn Phillips

Senior Communications Specialist Jessica Ridge

Food Editor Vianney Rodriguez

Senior Designer Jane Sharpe

Proofreader Shannon Oelrich

TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 80, Number 4 (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 76 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.

Co-op members: Please notify your co-op of address changes or other subscription requests.

POSTMASTER Send address changes to *Texas Co-op Power* (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of *Texas Co-op Power* showing old address and key numbers.

ADVERTISING Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 or esproull@texas-ec.org for information about purchasing display ad space in *Texas Co-op Power* and/or in our 26 sister publications in other states. Advertisements in *Texas Co-op Power* are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication.

COPYRIGHT All content © 2023 Texas Electric Cooperatives Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction of this issue or any portion of it is expressly prohibited without written permission. Willie Wirehand © 2023 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

 **Texas Electric Cooperatives**
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

 **American MainStreet Publications**



IT'S ROCKET SCIENCE

(AND SO MUCH MORE)



High school students learn to problem-solve by building giant, powerful rockets

In the predawn hours one Friday in May, a yellow school bus hurtles down U.S. Highway 281 with 19 students, one teacher and a lot of uncertainty.

A few things are known. The juniors and seniors from McGregor High School are heading to the town of Stonewall in the Hill Country. They will launch three rockets they have designed and built based on their own research and calculations—part of a curriculum called SystemsGo, developed by a local STEM teacher in 1996.

And that's where the uncertainty begins.

The science, technology, engineering and math students have never done this before. The year before, a funding mishap robbed them of the chance. This school year, they've done and redone the math, studied and applied the physics, checked the aerodynamics, and then built the rockets based on what they've taught themselves, measuring 100 times if they measured once. Because of the nature of rockets, they haven't been tested outside of computer simulations.

If that isn't enough, weather forecasts call for afternoon thunderstorms in Stonewall, which means their launch window could be compressed.

And it doesn't help that most haven't slept much. Some worked through the night. Others were bothered by an overnight storm; others consumed by what-ifs.

And there are a lot of what-ifs.

Moments after stepping down the bus steps at the Stonewall Chamber of Commerce, where five other classes from five other schools are already gathered, teacher Johnathan Whatley is approached by one of his students. Mario Suarez is wearing a T-shirt with "Never Waste Talent" on the back and a sheepish grin.

"We have a predicament," he says. Of course they do.

OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP A.J. Jimenez carries a McGregor High School rocket off the bus on launch day. Aaron Olivera checks parachute lines. McGregor rocket club students huddle during the competition. A rocket launches during a SystemsGo event in Stonewall. RIGHT The thrill of a successful launch for members of the McGregor class.

STAGE 1 | Getting Off the Ground

Dozens of high schools participate in the SystemsGo rocketry curriculum, which culminates in competitive launches at the end of the school year. Teachers leave the rocket building and problem-solving up to the students.

Whatley's go-to response is, "That's interesting. What do you think?" The idea is for the students to figure things out on their own, which is how SystemsGo got started.

Brett Williams was a marine fisheries expert at Texas A&M University at Galveston. When he retired in 1996, he became a science teacher at Fredericksburg High School.

"I didn't have lab equipment," Williams says. "I didn't really have anything. I didn't have a curriculum. I was making it all up as I went."

Today—27 years later—65 schools across Texas and New Mexico launch more than 150 rockets each spring at test sites in Texas and New Mexico as part of SystemsGo, Williams' brainchild.

These aren't toy rockets. These are full-fledged 7-foot-long projectiles, some carefully configured to carry a 1-pound payload as close to a mile high as possible or break the sound barrier. The most advanced few among them carry a payload of university research to an altitude of 50,000 feet.

STAGE 2 | Preparing the Mission

A few miles down the road from McGregor is Crawford, home of SpaceX's rocket testing facility. Occasionally, Whatley's class hears the loud roar of ignition.

Last year's class even got to visit. They saw the facilities



McGregor's Kirsten Galle, left, and Isaiah Thomas prepare a rocket. Teacher Johnathan Whatley calls Galle "a mathematical whiz."



and were allowed off the bus just once—to see close-up the first rocket the company landed safely.

"That was the 100th rocket they'd launched," Whatley says. "That's not a cautionary tale, it's a tale of hope. Here are professionals who have it blow up on them. And then they succeed."

After graduating from Baylor University in 2014, Whatley applied for a coaching job at McGregor, also agreeing to teach the rockets class after he was hired.

"It made me really excited for just the possibilities of different types of education," he says. Some students—even the brightest ones—don't learn to think for themselves, and some need to be challenged, he says. So that's what he does.

The fall semester focuses on the basics of flight. During the first weeks of class, Whatley dumps an assortment of rocket parts on a large table and asks the students to build a small rocket that's fitted with a beginner's rocket engine and launched.

"They make some pretty terrible stuff," Whatley says. "They think the more fins the better. They get creative. Like why not? But that's them failing—but then learning from their mistakes."

Their second goal, Whatley says, "is to build a stable rocket." That's the one they'll try to fly in Stonewall.

STAGE 3 | The Race to Launch

It turns out the predicament Suarez mentions is minor. They forgot a section of plastic tubing vital to fueling. "It's a chance to work on your social skills," Whatley says to Suarez. The implication is clear: Ask around.

The group is an amalgam: football players, makers, math nerds and more. But all plan to attend college, many in technical fields.

"This class definitely reshaped the way I went about doing school," says Suarez, who wants to be a hair stylist. "Before, I would slack in classes. But whenever I got to rockets, I understood that you can't do that. There are deadlines that need to be met."

For Williams, there's more than just hard work, or even serendipity, at play with SystemsGo. He recalls cold calling a rocket parts company only to unexpectedly catch the CEO at lunch, reading an article about the program as he ate. He was a yes.

And there was a real long shot—dialing the Pentagon from the middle of nowhere, hoping to find someone to ask about borrowing some launch technology. He reached a general's adjutant, who was in Fredericksburg the week before for a presentation. Impressed, he connected Williams to the general, who said, "I know I'm supposed to say no, but this guy tells me I have to say yes." And he did.

STAGE 4 | Launch, Recovery, Retrospection

The storms do not materialize in Stonewall. After much back and forth with officials examining the rockets, a few close calls, and frantic recalculations, all three McGregor rockets pass muster: They launch and fly straight and high.

None earns an award, though one just misses reaching the 1-mile threshold. The students don't know that as they bus back to McGregor, stopping at the Chick-fil-A in Marble Falls for a celebratory feast.

Once back, the teams do their post-launch analyses, looking at what they did right and what they didn't. Uncertainty will be met with experience next year, when the nucleus of 11th graders returns for a chance to improve.

Schematics will be honed. Math will be tightened. Construction will be polished.

Next May, the sky's the limit (weather permitting). ■



HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

In the magazine and on TexasCoopPower.com, we make it easy to shop for friends and family.



Homegrown Texas Pecans and Pecan Treats

Berdoll's has been family-owned for 44 years. We make delicious pecan pies, chocolate pecans, honey-glazed pecans and more. Shop our retail store or let us ship the perfect gift for you!

(512) 321-6157
berdoll.com



Ideal Arm Protection for Any Activity

Helps Prevent Bruising and Protects Those With Thin Skin! Soft leather protective sleeves help protect you from 100's of injury-prone chores you do at work, home, farm, or ranch. Even has adjustable airflow!

(651) 492-4830
armchaps.com

COMES IN 4 COLORS AND 7 SIZES



1950s Flashback Calendar

Large 20-by-15-inch calendar with 12 watercolor scenes. Revisit the past with these iconic '50s settings by Texas State Artist George Boutwell. \$15 plus tax and \$3.50 shipping. See website for quantity pricing.

1-800-243-4316
gboutwell.com



Texas Red Grapefruit and Avocados

Always a gift in good taste. Orchard-fresh grapefruit and other Texas products are all hand-selected, carefully packed and shipped to be delivered just in time for the holidays.

1-800-580-1900
crockettfarms.com



The Best of Typically Texas Cookbook

Favorite recipes from Texas Co-op Power. Look back at these best-loved recipes from two of our most popular cookbooks. Contact your local co-op today, or place your order online.

texascooppower.com/shop



Fudge and Divinity for the Holidays

The Best Fudge in Texas. The Best Divinity in the World. Bring back those childhood memories of Christmas with the sweet gift of fudge and divinity from Holiday Farms.

holidayfarmscandy.com
divinitybydave.etsy.com



***Still in
the Saddle
Again***



CALF ROPING AT 80? COMPETITION—AND CAMARADERIE— HAVE NO UPPER LIMITS IN THE SENIOR RODEO CIRCUIT

Competitors pace their horses before a barrel racing event on a warm October day at Circle T Arena. It's the statewide finals, and competitors are wearing their finest—spotless boots, hats and tack. Their high-strung mounts trot back and forth at the dusty arena in Hamilton, about 70 miles west of Waco, awaiting their call times.

When the clock starts, horse and rider burst from the gate in a blaze of energy and graying hair. Precision turns, pivots and raw speed streak through the arena. Cheers of support rise from the grandstands: "You got this, Grandma!" and "Let's go, Gram!"

It's all over in a few blinks.

Billie Bright, 63, takes the win with a time of 15.8—only 2.5 seconds slower than the current national champion, who is about 35 years younger. Not bad for an oldster. Four-time National Finals Rodeo world champion Hailey Kinsel, 29, holds the fastest barrel time—13.34 seconds.

Today's statewide finals are one of the 23 events the Texas Senior Pro Rodeo Association, celebrating 45 years in 2023, hosts for competitors 40 and older. Rex Sandifer's father, Morris, was one of the founding members of the organization in Waco in 1978.

"There were lots of amateur rodeos at the time, but it's just difficult as a 40-year-old to compete against 20-year-olds," Sandifer says. So Morris and a few other aging cowboys organized calf roping events for the older crowd. That grew into steer dogging, bareback and bull riding. "And all of them said, well, why don't we just go in and make a rodeo association out of it?"

The TSPRA put on full rodeos, including bull and bronc riding, in the 1980s. "There were probably two or three of those guys that were pretty good bull riders, and then the rest of the guys were people who wished that they were bull riders earlier in their lives," Sandifer says with a laugh.

The decision was made to drop the more dangerous events from the schedule but not because they didn't have competitors. "It was hard to get producers to haul animals for eight or 10 people," says Sandifer, a member of Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative.

Today, many of TSPRA's 300-plus members are former pro rodeo riders, ropers and barrel racers from Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Ages range from the association minimum into the 80s, and competitors are grouped by age. But some old-timers can still beat the young whippersnappers, and many older members choose to compete in multiple younger divisions.

"Some people join and think it's going to be easy because it's all old-timers, but we have cowboys and cowgirls that are still going to circuit finals and winning open rodeos," says Beverly Shoaf, secretary of the TSPRA board of directors.

Bright, a member of Taylor Electric Cooperative from Baird, has been competing in rodeos for 50 years and is one of the top barrel racers in the 60-plus division. She has had to refine her approach.

"For me, at my age, I've learned that I can't ride just every horse that comes around," she says. "I have to look for a



OPPOSITE J.J. Jolley of Stephenville whips around a barrel during the Texas Senior Pro Rodeo Association finals last October in Hamilton. ABOVE Karen Little of San Saba gets a hug from her grandson Asher.



"It's real important to have these rodeos because if you ever quit, you're done." —REX SANDIFER

horse that moves a little smoother and doesn't throw a whole lot of torque."

Earlier in her career, Bright could spend hours training on horseback, but these days, she rides for half an hour before giving her knees a break. "We have to have a lot of core strength to do what we do at our age," she says. "Your hand-eye coordination needs to be real sharp. And if you don't compete fairly often, like every two weeks or so, you get slower and slower."

But Bright says other skills have only improved. Her ability to read animals gives her a competitive advantage that came with age. "You can anticipate nearly what a horse is fixing to do from each step that they take," she says. "Each stride that they take, they're telling you something if you're really listening."

Tomm Owens, vice president of the TSPRA board and a member of Heart of Texas Electric Cooperative, didn't join the association until he was 50.

Rex Sandifer of Elgin prepares his lasso. His father, Morris, was one of the founders of the senior circuit in 1978.

"I was competing in [pro] events when I was 35, 40, 45. I was one of them that held out," says Owens, who's trying to convince his friends to join. "Their pride just won't let them be old yet."

For Owens, aging into a new bracket is part of the fun. "You kind of get excited again," he says, "because you're going to be the youngest in the group, and you're hoping you're one of the best."

Like Bright, he says his experience gives him a competitive advantage—but for a different reason. "Mentally it's easier as I get older. I don't get as frustrated when things don't go right," Owens says. "You learn not to let the little things bother you."

But he admits that the physical aspect only gets tougher. "Once you get out of shape, it's really hard at 55–60 to get back into shape," he says. "I do 20–30 minutes of stretching every morning and then some situps and pushups."

Jimmy Tobolka is living proof that bodies in motion tend to stay in motion. At 88, he's TSPRA's oldest member and still competes in the 80-plus breakaway, where a mounted rider ropes a running calf.



ABOVE Pat and Jimmy Tobolka of Caldwell are regular TSPRA competitors. Jimmy, at 88, is the circuit's oldest member. LEFT Doug Richards of Bedias closes in on a calf.



“Once you start doing it, it’s hard to get quit doing it, you know?” he says. “It’s helped keep me going all these years.”

One of the youngest members of the association is Seth Smithson, the president of the board, who turns 40 in December. “I think it’s a breath of fresh air from the hustle and bustle,” he says. The 2023 TSPRA statewide finals are October 19–21 at Circle T Arena in Hamilton. “You come hang out with the older crowd and watch these guys compete and see how great they are with their horses, and you can definitely learn a thing or two.”

The TSPRA’s prizes aren’t much—trophy saddles and buckles—but that’s not the main reason any of these competitors are here.

“Nobody’s going to get rich at our rodeos,” Owens says. “So much of it is just being able to see all the guys you used to rodeo with, cook steaks out back at the trailers and eat a meal Saturday night with maybe 10 or 15 people at every other trailer. That’s a big, big part of it.”

But no one can question the enthusiasm and the dedication these athletes have for their sport—for continuing to hone their craft, even as their bodies falter.

“We’re all just very grateful to still be able to throw a leg over a horse,” Bright says. “And when you have that gratitude of still being able to do it, nobody’s moaning and groaning about winning.” ■

SPECIAL OFFER FOR NEW CUSTOMERS ONLY

YES Please send me the following:

QTY	DESCRIPTION	PRICE	TOTAL
	56-Coin Collector's Set (limit 3)	\$19.95	
	Display Folder	\$4.95	
	Personalize my folder for \$1.97 each (Reg. \$3.95)*		
1	Uncirculated Lincoln "Shield" Cent	FREE!	
	Shipping	FREE!	
	Sales Tax	FREE!	
	ORDER MUST BE RECEIVED WITHIN 30 DAYS	TOTAL	\$

Write your personalization here, limited to 30 characters including spaces

Grid for personalization

ACTUAL LETTERING WILL APPEAR ON ONE LINE. Folder sold separately. Personalized Items cannot be returned.

Payment Method: Check payable to Littleton Coin Co.

VISA MasterCard American Express Discover

Card #: _____ Exp. Date /


Card number grid

Name _____

Address _____ Apt# _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-Mail _____

Mail to:  Littleton Coin Company
Offer Code: 25H467
1309 Mt. Eustis Rd Littleton, NH 03561-3737

Now! Complete National Park Quarter Set Only \$19.95!



Final Issue



Common Obverse Actual Size

Don't miss out! The final coin has been released and quantities are limited for these **Uncirculated Complete 56-Coin sets!** The first coin in this set was issued in 2010.

- **FREE** Shipping!
- **FREE** Gift: Uncirculated Lincoln Shield Cent

You'll also receive a handpicked trial selection of fascinating coins from our **No-Obligation Coins-on-Approval Service**, from which you may purchase any or none of the coins – return balance in 15 days – with option to cancel at any time.

Personalize Your Folder!

- Add a name or special message
- Embossed in gold-colored foil

SAVE 50%

John Sample

Made in USA

Mail Coupon Today! For Faster Service Visit:
www.LittletonCoin.com/Specials

 **Littleton Coin Company**[®]

Serving Collectors Since 1945

Offer Code: 25H467



If North Texas Is Your Market, We've Got You Covered.

Target customers close to home with the North Texas advertising section of *Texas Co-op Power*. Be part of a statewide magazine—without the statewide cost. Call or email today.



NORTH TEXAS AUDIENCE
Circulation 590,500
Readership 1,358,150

TexasCoopPower

Contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251 or advertising@TexasCoopPower.com



TCP Gift Shop

Find Texas Treasures

Texas food, music, housewares, gifts and more—find it all on our website, along with great deals for *TCP* readers.

Just pick and click—it's easy to shop for friends and family without leaving home.

TCP Shop now
TexasCoopPower.com/shop

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. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

Never ones to miss an opportunity, we carefully steadied our glasses of bubbly and 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, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

With its remarkable retrograde hour and minute indicators, sunburst guilloche face and precision movement, this design is truly one of a kind. What does retrograde mean? Instead of displaying the hands rotating on an axis like most watches, the hands sweep in a semicircle, then return to their starting point and begin all over again.

Retrograde watches by the big brands can set you back thousands; one recent offering from a big French fashion house is selling for more than \$150,000! But because we've designed the 1920s Retrograde Watch in-house, we can offer it to you for just \$99!

This watch is so wildly popular with our customers that we're actually concerned about running out; we only have 937 729 left for this ad!



JOIN MORE THAN 1 MILLION SMART PEOPLE WHO LOVE STAUER WATCHES

Watch Specifications:

- Precision movement
- Stainless steel case, caseback and crown
- Retrograde hour and minute indicators
- Water-resistant to 5 ATM
- Brown genuine leather band
- Fits wrists up to 8"

1920s Retrograde Watch

~~\$399~~ \$99* + S&P **Save \$300**

**Special price only for customers using the offer code.*

1-800-333-2045

Your Insider Offer Code: **RGW141-01**

"An elegant and exciting timepiece that every collector will love."

— George Thomas, internationally renowned watch expert

"[A] unique and beautiful timepiece."

— Carlos C., Los Banos, CA

Stauer, 14101 Southcross Drive W., Ste 155, Dept. RGW141-01, Burnsville, MN 55337 www.stauer.com

Stauer® | AFFORD THE EXTRAORDINARY®



Energizing Your Future

A Leadership Message from our Board President and Chief Executive Officer

Brian Menking, NEC Board President

Nueces Electric Cooperative's story in 2022 is one that focuses on service to our members, managing costs, and ensuring safety and service to our employees and our communities, all based on a foundation of financial strength and best practice governance, to ensure the challenges and opportunities of the electric industry are met to energize your future for years to come.

Challenges Faced

NEC moved to business as usual after the pandemic, though there is no doubt we were challenged by the increasing costs associated with the ongoing supply chain impacts, inflationary and public policy pressures, coupled with strong growth in 2022. Despite these cost challenges, NEC remains strong financially with operating revenue just under \$105 million during 2022. This represents an increase of 25% over 2021, an increase primarily driven by rising costs for power generation.

It's important we emphasize the pressure on power costs during 2022, which continues today and remains significant. NEC saw a 10% increase in the number of kilowatt-hours purchased due to member growth and their higher demand for electricity, but our cost to purchase power was up 30.5%. Geopolitical, regulatory, and public policy pressures have played a large role in these increases. Regulatory and litigious efforts to target fossil fuels continue to hurt the electric system nationwide with unreasonable timelines to eliminate fossil fuel sources which are plentiful domestically.

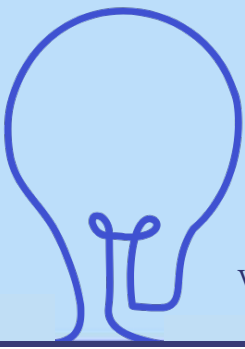
Renewable energy sources are valuable as an energy resource but remain essentially "non-dispatchable" 24 hours a day. Energy storage is

growing but has not yet developed to a level to support renewables and make their power available 24 hours a day adequately and affordably. The Texas electric system is challenged by years of federal and state subsidies incentivizing new "non-dispatchable" (renewable) energy sources. The subsidy-induced renewables market developed so quickly in Texas that it left significant gaps in available power when the sun doesn't shine, the wind isn't blowing and demand for power is high.

NEC along with other electric cooperatives and partners in Texas have worked closely with our Texas legislators and regulators to find ways to incentivize more dispatchable resources (like natural gas which is generally available 24 hours a day). Bringing these new dispatchable resources online will take time. It continues to be our goal to advocate for a diverse portfolio of generation resources from a variety of fuel sources. This goal helps to mitigate the price vulnerability and risks associated with a single fuel source or type of power generation. NEC commends the work done by our area legislators who worked tirelessly to support and strengthen the Texas electric grid.

Financials

This period of high inflation and supply chain problems impacted your Co-op's 2022 costs across the board. We saw costs rise for power, postage, paper, computers, meters and communication equipment, transformers, cable, wages and many more components necessary to bring you electricity. Without the power costs discussed above, NEC experienced an overall increase in operating expenses of 7.4%.



Varzavand "Avan" Irani, NEC Chief Executive Officer



This aligns with 2022's inflation rates. NEC had an 8% increase in operations & maintenance expenses attributed to post-COVID 19 catch-up training, and rising fleet, equipment, and materials costs. A 15% increase in consumer accounts and customer service expenses was experienced because of the NEC Co-op Energy billing system conversion, increasing information system costs and the rising cost of labor. Despite these cost increases, NEC is pleased that we could meet the challenge of increasing costs without increasing NEC members' electric distribution rates.

By the end of the year, NEC held strong margins and was able to allocate over \$6.5 million back to our members' patronage/capital credit accounts. This represents direct growth in NEC members' owner equity in the Co-op, and these funds are expected to be refunded to them in future years. In 2022, patronage capital of \$3.2 million was paid back to our members. In addition, NEC Co-op Energy refunded \$3.5 million in Power Perks to NEC Co-op Energy members who purchased energy in 2022 and demonstrated their loyalty by remaining with them.

Safety

We could not have met these challenges without the knowledge, commitment, adaptability, and tremendous efforts of our NEC employees. NEC employees worked in 2022 with a mission to serve each of you, while they also maintained a high safety level. With no lost-time or vehicular accidents in 2022, they've maintained this record now for over 3.5 years. Bringing our employees safely home to their families each night remains our first priority.

NEC's operations team worked to bring the duration of member outages down by 3 percent while continuing efforts to meet growth and maintenance demands in all areas of the NEC distribution system. New technology continues to be a focus and is implemented throughout NEC operations to support improvement in service to NEC members where it is cost-effective.

NEC Co-op Energy saw record growth in 2022 as Texans increasingly realize that an honest, not-for-profit power provider is a best-in-class value for a chosen Texas power provider.

Energizing Our Communities

NEC employees strengthened their commitment to NEC members through their community work and giving. NEC employees volunteered for six events supporting local organizations, events, and charities. NEC gave \$22,000 in scholarships to 15 members in 2022 and employees gave away over 300 trees to members during the 2022 Texas Arbor Day event. Finally, with your support of Operation RoundUp, Nueces Electric Charities was able to share \$147,000 with 30 area charities to support the good and important work they do in our communities for all of us and our neighbors.

Energizing Your Future!

Securing reliable and affordable energy needs is a responsibility with its fair share of challenges but for your Nueces Electric Cooperative, it's our commitment to each of you. As we continue our mission of service to you, and our work to improve your quality of life, know that your not-for-profit electric cooperative continues to work and fight for you, "**Energizing Your Future**" in every possible way.



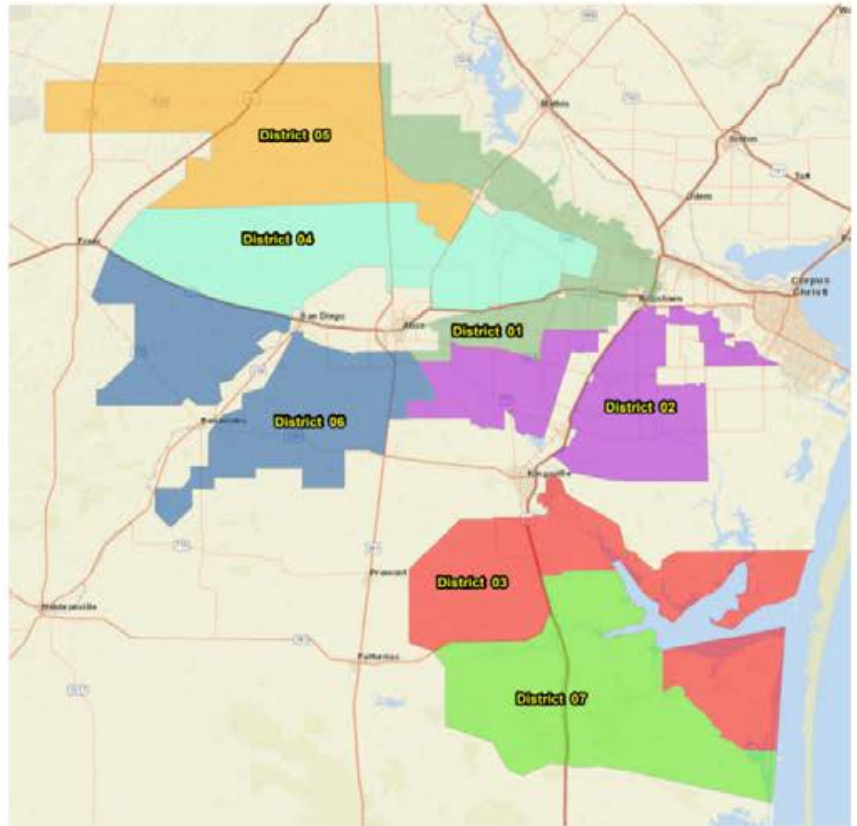
Current Board of Directors



DR. RUMALDO Z. JUAREZ
DISTRICT 1



GREGG TRUESDALE
DISTRICT 2



DAVID ROSSE,
SECRETARY TREASURER
DISTRICT 3



DONALD WAYNE HERRMANN
DISTRICT 4



SUE STEWART
DISTRICT 5



BRIAN MENKING,
PRESIDENT
DISTRICT 6



JUAN ALVARADO
DISTRICT 7



GLADYS ALLEN-LIPPINCOTT
DISTRICT 8 - RETAIL

Candidates for Election



DR. RUMALDO Z. JUAREZ
DISTRICT 1

Dr. Rumaldo Z. Juárez has been an NEC member since 2008 and was appointed by the NEC Board of Directors as District 1 NEC Director to fill the vacant seat in August 2012. Dr. Juárez serves on the following Co-op committees: Executive Committee (Vice President), Governance, Strategic Planning (Chair), Finance (Chair), Nueces Charities Inc., Education, and Retail Marketing. Dr. Juárez currently has a National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Director Gold Certificate. Along with his fellow directors, he is committed to ensuring that: (1) the best interests of all NEC members and employees are served, (2) the use of alternative sources of energy are used to their full potential, and (3) that NEC continues to stay abreast the demands of a rapidly changing energy industry. Dr. Juárez received bachelor's and master's degrees in sociology from Texas A&M University-College Station, is a Distinguished Military Graduate of its ROTC Program, and a Vietnam Veteran. He received a Ph.D. in Rural Sociology from Penn State University. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Management Development Program and the Texas Governor's Executive Development Program and a Distinguished Alumni of the Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences. During his 36 years in the field of higher education, he held academic appointments at the University of Arizona; University of Texas-Pan American (University of Texas Rio Grande Valley); Adjunct Professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch-Galveston and the University of Texas Health Science Center-San Antonio; Dean and Professor, College of Health Professions at Texas State University and President of Texas A&M University - Kingsville. He also was a Social Science Analyst in the Office of Evaluation and Technical Analysis in the Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C. and served in various state, national and international advisory boards. Dr. Juárez currently serves as President and Director of the Robstown Area Historical Museum, Board Member, Past-President and Founding Member of the Robstown Independent School District Education Foundation and a member of the Rotary International Club of Corpus Christi Northwest. He lives in Calallen with his wife Teresa.



GREGG TRUESDALE
DISTRICT 2

Gregg Truesdale has been an NEC wires member since 1971 and was appointed NEC director in February 2010. Mr. Truesdale currently acts as President on the Board of Directors at Wright Materials, Inc./W.T. Mining, at a family-owned business. Mr. Truesdale serves on the Violet Water Supply Corporation Board of Directors, has been a Buc Days Rodeo Committee Member for many years, was a Trustee of the Robstown Show Barn, and served as President of the Coastal Bend Catholic Life Branch #35. Mr. Truesdale also served as a Volunteer for the Nueces County Junior Livestock (NCJLS), sat on the Board of Directors for two years and has served for many years as the NCJLS Horse Show Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Truesdale believes some of the most important qualities of an NEC director include dedication to members and the ability to make decisions with their best interests in mind. He has learned that to be successful, a director must have an open mind and a willingness to embrace innovative approaches and new ideas. Mr. Truesdale is a National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director and holds a Board Leadership Certificate. Mr. Truesdale also serves on the Nueces Charities Board along with several committees which include Strategic Planning/ CEO Evaluation, Retail Market, Governance, Finance, and is the Chairman of the Annual Meeting Committee. Mr. Truesdale and his wife have been married for 52 years and they reside in Robstown, Texas where they raised their family and served their community in a variety of ways. They have a son and daughter, Dwayne Truesdale (wife Corina) and Heather Truesdale Schomburg (husband Matt). Mr. Truesdale and his wife are the proud grandparents of Nicole, Megan, Jake, Tyler, Maverick, Miller, and Riggs. They are also proud great-grandparents of Michael, Abigail, and Jolene. In Mr. Truesdale's free time, he enjoys roping and spending time with family.



DONALD WAYNE HERRMANN
DISTRICT 4

Donald Wayne Herrmann has been an NEC member all his life and was appointed NEC director in January 2005. He is a National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Credentialed Cooperative Director, and currently serves on the NEC Strategic Planning/CEO Evaluation Committee, along with the Education Committee. Mr. Herrmann is a crop farmer, rancher, and fish farmer in Nueces County. He believes the most important role of an NEC director is to work in unity with fellow directors to make decisions that are in the best interest of the entire co-op and its members. Mr. Herrmann attended Del Mar Technical College and served on the Banquete ISD Board including terms as both president and vice-president. He has also served as president and vice-president of the Banquete Grain Co-op, on the board of Coastal Bend Youth City, as the finance and administrative chairman of the Banquete United Methodist Church, as a director, president, and vice-president of the Nueces County Jr. Livestock Show, and as a board member of the Texas Youth Rodeo Association and Nueces County Youth Rodeo Association. Mr. Herrmann resides in Robstown with his wife, Kathy, where they raised their three sons, Jon (wife Lacey), Scot (wife Jennifer) and Joe. Mr. Herrmann and his wife are proud grandparents to Hallee, Hayes, Hank, Landon, Logan, and Braden.



Balance Sheet



ASSETS

UTILITY PLANT AT COST	2022
Electric Plant in Service	\$ 153,243,388
Construction Work in Progress	1,619,184
	<u>\$ 154,862,572</u>
Less: Accumulated Provision for Depreciation	35,401,303
	<u>\$ 119,461,269</u>
OTHER PROPERTY AND INVESTMENTS	
Investments in Associated Organizations	\$ 49,921,136
Investments in Treasury Strips	30,359,099
Other Investments - Restricted	751,566
	<u>\$ 81,031,801</u>
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash - General	\$ 10,227,895
Temporary Cash Investments	178,962
Accounts Receivable (Less allowance for uncollectibles of \$232,060 in 2022 and \$182,288 in 2021)	2,926,300
Accrued Unbilled Revenue	2,646,207
Materials and Supplies	1,939,614
Other Current and Accrued Assets	380,572
Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 18,299,550</u>
DEFERRED CHARGES	<u>\$ 284,197</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 219,076,817</u>

EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES

EQUITIES	
Memberships	\$ 575,015
Patronage Capital	113,972,426
Other Equities	8,738,495
	<u>\$ 123,285,936</u>
LONG-TERM DEBT	
CoBank Mortgage Notes	\$ 57,859,176
CFC Mortgage Notes	13,982,377
Less: Current Maturities	(4,070,000)
	<u>\$ 67,771,553</u>
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Current Maturities of Long-Term Debt	\$ 4,070,000
Accounts Payable - Purchased Power	6,906,106
Accounts Payable - Other	1,174,495
Consumer Deposits	2,231,968
Accrued Taxes	415,065
Accrued Interest	284,449
Patronage Capital Payable	1,176,924
Accrued Employee Compensated Absences	1,192,229
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	415,708
Total Current Liabilities	<u>\$ 17,866,944</u>
DEFERRED CREDITS	<u>\$ 10,152,384</u>
TOTAL EQUITIES AND LIABILITIES	<u>\$ 219,076,817</u>

Statement of Income



FULL AUDITED REPORT AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
NUECESELECTRIC.ORG/TRANSPARENCY-AND-YOUR-COOPERATIVE

OPERATING REVENUES		2022
Residential	\$	79,201,125
Small Commercial and Industrial		14,408,877
Large Commercial and Industrial		7,525,858
Public Street and Highway Lighting		1,037,769
Unbilled Revenue		17,650
Late Payment Penalties		917,689
Rent from Electric Property		51,585
Other Operating Revenues		918,561
Naval Base Net Margin (Loss)		<u>890,061</u>
Total Operating Revenues	\$	<u>104,969,175</u>
OPERATING EXPENSES		
Purchased Power	\$	72,726,777
Distribution - Operation		1,817,229
Distribution - Maintenance		3,618,484
Consumer Accounts		5,543,250
Customer Service and Information		368,281
Administrative and General		6,550,744
Depreciation		4,482,531
Taxes		1,560,360
Other Interest		
Other Deductions		158,912
Total Operating Expenses	\$	<u>96,726,568</u>
OPERATING MARGINS - Before Fixed Charges	\$	<u>8,242,607</u>
FIXED CHARGES		
Interest on Long-Term Debt	\$	3,171,675
Amortization of Premium on Reacquired Debt		80,988
	\$	<u>3,252,663</u>
OPERATING MARGINS - After Fixed Charges	\$	<u>4,989,944</u>
G&T Capital Credits	\$	2,318,103
Other Capital Credits		938,864
	\$	<u>3,256,967</u>
NET OPERATING MARGINS	\$	<u>8,246,911</u>
NONOPERATING MARGINS		
Interest Income	\$	933,618
Other Nonoperating Income		(1,969)
Gain on Disposition of Property		(3,076)
	\$	<u>928,573</u>
NET MARGINS	\$	9,175,484
PATRONAGE CAPITAL - BEGINNING OF YEAR		109,063,296
Patronage Capital Retired		(3,214,829)
Unbilled Revenue Transferred to Other Equities		(122,952)
Nonoperating Margins Transferred to Other Equities		<u>(928,573)</u>
PATRONAGE CAPITAL - END OF YEAR	\$	<u>113,972,426</u>



Minutes of the Annual Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The 84th Annual Meeting was held October 14, 2022, at the Richard M. Borchard Regional Fairgrounds. President Brian Menking called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Director David Rosse served as Secretary. Upon determining that a quorum was present, the meeting was called to order by President Brian Menking.

Pastor Scott Herbert, Messiah Lutheran Church, delivered the invocation.

RECOGNITION OF YOUTH TOUR DELEGATES & RAMIRO DE LA PAZ MEMORIAL FUND AND JOHN L. SIMS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

District #1 Director, Dr. Rumaldo Juarez introduced the 2022 Ramiro De La Paz Memorial Fund & John L. Sims Memorial Scholarship winners. He also announced the Washington D.C. Youth Tour delegates.

RECOGNITION OF THE HALO FLIGHT PROGRAM

President, Brian Menking introduced Halo Flight as the recipient of the Nueces Electric Charities Community Grants.

READING OF PROOF OF MAILING OF MEETING NOTICE

President Menking read the “Proof of Mailing of the Notice of the Annual Meeting.” After the reading, the document was submitted to be attached to the official minutes of the meeting.

MINUTES OF 2021 ANNUAL MEETING

President, Brian Menking stated that the minutes of the 2021 annual meeting had been provided in the October 2022 issue of the Texas Co-op Power Magazine and the Annual Report Booklet. Upon calling for corrections or additions to the minutes, a motion was made, seconded, and duly carried that the minutes of the 2021 Annual Membership Meeting be adopted and published.

TREASURER’S REPORT

President, Brian Menking stated that the Treasurer’s Report had been provided in the October 2022 issue of the Texas Co-op Power Magazine and the Annual Report booklet. A motion was made, seconded, and duly carried to approve the report as published.

PRESIDENT & CEO REPORTS

A video of staff and Board President Brian Menking was shown to our membership in attendance.

MEMBER VOTING

Survey and Ballot Systems (SBS) supervised the collection and counting of the ballots. Upon completion of the counting of the ballots, the following results certified by Richard Berg, a representative of SBS, and Board Secretary/Treasurer David Rosse announced the results:

District 5 Director:	Susan Stewart	6,070 Votes
District 6 Director:	Brian Menking	6,074 Votes
District 8 Director:	Gladys Allen-Lippincott	3,922 Votes
District 8 Director:	Ken Combs	2,341 Votes

It was declared that those elected as Directors for Districts 5, 6 and 8 are: Susan Stewart (District 5), Brian Menking (District 6), and Gladys Allen-Lippincott (District 8), all for three-year terms.

NEC RETAIL MEMBER REFERRAL PROGRAM WINNERS AND PRIZE DRAWINGS

Chief Retail Officer Frank Wilson announced the NEC Co-op Energy Referral Program winners. NEC Co-op Energy member Cynthia Tobar received a \$500 electric bill credit for first place and MPM Homes, Inc. received a \$250 electric bill credit for runner up. Prize drawings were held after referral program winners were announced.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 p.m. Motion carried.

David Rosse, Secretary

APPROVED: Brian Menking, President



OVER **15** SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Applications open on **October 1st, 2023**

Eligibility Requirements: Applicants must be a high school senior that is a dependent of a member and must have received services for at least 6 months before the February 2nd deadline.

2
YEAR
SCHOLARSHIP

LINE
WORKER
SCHOLARSHIP

4
YEAR
SCHOLARSHIP



or visit nueceselectric.org



JUNE 9TH - JUNE 17TH
ALL EXPENSE PAID TRIP

The Government-In-Action Youth Leadership Tour is an annual week-long trip to Washington, D.C. and Austin, TX that is open to high school juniors.

*applicants must be dependents of members

APPLICATION OPENS OCTOBER 1ST!



or visit nueceselectric.org

LEADERSHIP.
FRIENDSHIP.
LIFE CHANGING.



EVERY PENNY COUNTS

Operation Round Up is a simple billing program in which your electric bill is rounded to the next dollar. This change is donated to local area charities doing great work in our communities.

Call our office to enroll and give back today!



PROTECT

WHAT MATTERS MOST

Whether you are home or away, protect what matters most from unexpected power outages with a Generac Home Standby Generator.

\$0 MONEY DOWN + LOW MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTIONS

Contact a Generac dealer for full terms and conditions

REQUEST A FREE QUOTE

**CALL NOW BEFORE THE
NEXT POWER OUTAGE**

(512) 774-5606

FREE *7-year Extended Warranty* – A \$735 Value!*

*To qualify, consumers must request a quote, purchase, install and activate the generator with a participating dealer. Call for a full list of terms and conditions.



GENERAC®



Do it Right with

DR® is the LEADER in Leaf Vacs

★ USA

ENGINEERED AND BUILT

Assembled in the USA
using domestic and
foreign parts.



EASY 1-hand dumping

Tow-Behind

- #1 in vacuum power and capacity
- **NEW PRO MAX** model holds up to 450 gallons
- All models newly redesigned with up to 20% more capacity

Walk-Behind

- **NEW PILOT XT** models fill paper leaf bags for curbside pickup
- Collects & mulches up to 50 lbs of leaves
- Includes onboard caddy for extra bags



Proudly Mr. Crappie

Plumber-turned-fishing master to be honored for success in and promotion of the sport he loves

BY LAURA TOLLEY

WALLY MARSHALL can talk crappie all day long.

Crappie the freshwater game fish, that is. Marshall wins tournaments catching crappie, including a national title in 2003; teaches young people how to lure in the fish; organizes angling events of his own; and sells rods, reels and lures under his trademarked name—Mr. Crappie.

Marshall is so synonymous with the sport he loves that he'll be cast into the Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame on October 6 as the hall's 38th inductee—and that's no fishing tale. The Grayson-Collin Electric Cooperative member is humbled by the honor.

"I tell you what, it's something else," says the jovial angler from Anna, in North Texas. "I never thought this would happen to me in my wildest dreams. I have to rate it right up there with my first bicycle—and that's pretty special."

Marshall, who grew up in Garland hunting birds and fishing, has spent decades building a crappie ministry of sorts, launching a fishing guide service and heralding the sport at countless other opportunities. Go to a tournament, go to a boat show, turn on a radio or a TV show about the outdoors, and you'll likely encounter Mr. Crappie. He puts some 90,000 miles a year on his truck spreading the word about the oval-shaped fish with a downturned mouth and spiny fins. Small and silvery with dark or black markings, the fish is pronounced "croppie."

"I want to help other people catch more crappie. It makes me happy," says Marshall, 67. "I'm the winner when other people are successful at crappie fishing." His efforts include creating a long line of products for crappie fishing, including rods, tackle boxes, buckets and lures with such fanciful names as Krappie Kickers and Slabalicious. "I do everything to catch a crappie."

His mission to educate anglers and his generosity in giving his time and resources to the fishing community earned him unanimous support for the state honor, said Dan Kessler, chairman of the Texas Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame's selection committee.

"Wally Marshall's outstanding accomplishments as a trailblazer in the sport of crappie fishing are unparalleled," Kessler says.

Marshall didn't really get hooked on crappie fishing until 1982, when he went on a memorable trip with a friend to nearby Lavon Lake. Two decades

later, realizing his hobby had gotten bigger than his day job, he says, he resigned as the plumbing superintendent at Garland Independent School District, telling his boss: "I can't chase my dreams here."

He went full time preaching the gospel of crappie. His work has included establishing the Mr. Crappie Big Crappie Classic Tournament in 2004, with adult and youth divisions, and the Crappie Expo, a three-day consumer show that includes a \$300,000 invitational tournament, a giant crappie fish fry and more than 100 exhibitors each September.

"He's always looking for ways to get more people, especially young people, interested in crappie fishing," says John Barns, who nominated Marshall for the hall of fame. Barns is the former president of Strike King, a lure company that carries Marshall's products.

At the heart of Marshall's passion for crappie is the fact that it's a family sport, one he enjoyed with his daughter when she was a child. You can do it until they "lay you in the ground," he says. Plus, it's a lot of fun.

"Once you find crappie, you can catch a lot of them," Marshall says, adding that there's not much waiting around time. "With crappie fishing, you can catch your limit." (That's 25 a day in Texas, and all must be at least 10 inches long from closed mouth to pinched tail.)

When going out to hunt crappie—he says the docks around Gun Barrel City on Cedar Creek Reservoir is a favorite spot—he urges anglers to slow down and observe their surroundings. Look for bushes, trees, tall grass and lily pads. Crappie like nice shade, just like people do.

Successful crappie fishing also requires the right equipment. Luckily, Marshall can sell you some.

He's a promoter, to be sure, but the fact is, he really loves the sport.

"It's about getting out in the great wilderness, by yourself, going mano a mano with the crappie," he says. And when a crappie takes the bait, there's this little thump.

"I live for the thump." ■

Wally Marshall lands a crappie on Ray Roberts Lake north of Denton.



MR.
CRAPPIE

VEXUS



It Still Reigns

At 50, Elmer Kelton's 'The Time It Never Rained' remains 'a book of the heart'

BY W.F. STRONG

WE SHOULD ALL BE grateful that Elmer Kelton was a poor cowboy. When he was a young man, the now-famous writer said his inability to rope and ride well pushed him toward reading and then writing. Had he been a better cowboy, he told a reporter in 1984, "I'd still be working out on some ranch on the Pecos River."

It's been 50 years since *The Time It Never Rained*, Kelton's classic novel, was published. Many Texas literary critics consider it one of the best novels written by a Texan about Texas. It was also Kelton's favorite book and what he called his signature work—of the nearly 50 novels he wrote before he died in 2009.

The novel received the Spur Award

and the Western Heritage Award.

The book is not your run-of-the-mill Western. There are no shootouts. No one dies. Wallace Kaufman, who taught at Duke University, wrote that the novel should rank "with Faulkner's work as the local made universal."

Author Shelley Armitage grew up in the 1950s in the Texas Panhandle, when and where the novel takes place.

"To see oneself and one's landscape so accurately and aesthetically rendered was life-changing—as it remains today: a book of the heart," Armitage says.

Mike Cox, author of 14 books on Texas and the West, notes that Kelton covered the terrible 1950s drought for the *San Angelo Standard-Times* and began

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



writing fiction on the side.

"He used what he knew about the dry spell for *The Time It Never Rained*, a novel I don't believe he ever expected to become a classic," Cox says. "I predict that as the West continues to get drier and drier due to global warming, his book will become even more important."

For prolific author Wyman Meinzer, Texas' official state photographer who once shared a book signing with Kelton, his "words conjured memories of blinding dust storms, dry stock tanks and a land void of palatable grass."

Jac Darsnek, the man behind the much-loved *Traces of Texas* accounts on social media and a ubiquitous traveler and photographer of Texas, was 17 when he discovered the novel. He still draws inspiration from Charlie Flagg, the novel's admirable protagonist, whom Kelton created from his own cowboy father.

"Elmer Kelton's tale of hardship and endurance and main character Charlie Flagg's astonishing self-reliance resonated within me in a place I never knew I had, and his descriptions of ranch life spoke to my inner Texan," Darsnek said. "Decades later, when confronted with some obstacle or tough choice, I'll ask myself, 'What would Charlie Flagg do?'"

Steve Davis, curator of the Southwestern writers collection at the Wittliff Collections at Texas State University, says *The Time It Never Rained* is one of the most important Texas novels and a masterful example of eyewitness literature.

"Kelton was on the front lines when the great drought devastated the land and people he knew intimately," Davis says. "His resulting novel, richly observed and deeply empathetic, stands as the truest, most profound portrait of that era." ■

Beans

Versatility turns this kitchen staple into a star

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

A quick and easy mixture of green, black and red beans tossed in a delicious, tangy dressing, this three-bean salad is great the day you make it, but it's even better to enjoy the next day for lunch.



Three-Bean Salad

4 teaspoons salt, divided use
 12 ounces fresh green beans,
 rinsed and cut into 1-inch pieces
 6 tablespoons olive oil
 6 tablespoons lemon juice
 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
 1 can black beans (15 ounces),
 drained and rinsed
 1 can red beans (15 ounces),
 drained and rinsed
 ¼ cup finely diced red onion
 1 cucumber, diced
 1 cup finely diced carrot
 ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
 4 tablespoons chopped fresh dill

1. Fill a pot halfway with water, add 2 teaspoons salt and bring to a boil.
2. Add green beans and cook for 3 minutes. Drain and pat dry.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together olive oil, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, cumin, pepper and remaining 2 teaspoons salt.
4. Add green beans, black beans and red beans to bowl. Stir to combine, then stir in red onion, cucumber and carrot.
5. Cover and chill until ready to serve. Before serving, stir in parsley and dill.

SERVES 6

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez while she cooks in *Cocina Gris* at sweetliffbake.com, where she features a recipe for Roasted Tomatillo Garbanzo Salad.



Little Pots of Red Beans With Sour Cream

ALEXANDRA DIBRELL
CENTRAL TEXAS EC

Sometimes cooking for two can be tricky. Don't worry—Dibrell has hungry twosomes covered with a simple one-pot dinner idea. Bacon, beans and a little jalapeño kick, served warm and topped with sour cream, are pure comfort.

- 2 strips bacon, diced**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- ½ small red onion, finely diced**
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely diced**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ¾ cup chicken broth or stock**
- 1 can kidney beans (15.5 ounces), drained**
- 4 tablespoons sour cream**
- Fresh cilantro sprigs, for garnish**

1. In a skillet, cook bacon until crisp. Remove from pan and drain.
2. Add olive oil, onion, jalapeño and salt. Sauté until soft and translucent.
3. Pour in chicken broth or stock and return bacon to skillet, bringing to a simmer.
4. Stir in beans and simmer until warmed through.
5. Ladle the beans into two bowls and top each with sour cream and cilantro.

SERVES 2

[MORE RECIPES >](#)



\$500 WINNER

Hurry Up Stew

EDITH FORSHAGE
GVEC



A filling, hearty meal that's easy to prepare at the end of a busy day, Forshage's Hurry Up Stew is pantry-friendly and can be whipped up in under 30 minutes.

SERVES 6

- 1 pound ground beef**
- 2 tablespoons dried beef bouillon**
- 1 can diced tomatoes with green chilis (15 ounces)**
- 1 carton chicken, beef or vegetable broth (32 ounces)**
- 1 can pinto beans (15 ounces), drained**
- 1 can garbanzo beans (15 ounces), drained**
- 1 can hominy (15 ounces), drained**
- 1 can potatoes (15 ounces), drained**
- 1 can diced carrots (15 ounces), drained**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**

1. In a nonstick pot, brown ground beef and drain.
2. Stir in bouillon, diced tomatoes and broth.
3. Add pinto beans, garbanzo beans, hominy, potatoes and carrots.
4. Add salt and pepper.
5. Simmer for 20 minutes to thoroughly heat ingredients.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

BEST BRUNCH DUE OCTOBER 10

Brunch is at your place this time. What will you serve? We're looking for the best recipes in Texas. Submit your favorite online by October 10 for a chance to win \$500.





Homemade Bean Dip

KAREN YEOMAN
SAN PATRICIO EC

Yeoman has been cooking up this family-favorite dip for 40 years for family gatherings, church functions and parties. It's easy and delicious, and we're excited to share it with you.

2 cups fully cooked pinto beans
2 tablespoons picante sauce
½ teaspoon garlic powder

¼ pound processed cheese product
2 tablespoons (¼ stick) butter
Tortilla or corn chips, for serving

1. Place beans, picante sauce and garlic powder into a blender. Blend until smooth.
2. In a glass bowl, melt cheese and butter in microwave, stirring at 30-second to 1-minute intervals until smooth.
3. Stir bean mixture into the cheese mixture until smooth. Microwave dip for 30-second to 1-minute intervals until thoroughly heated.
4. Serve warm dip with chips.

SERVES 10

TCP Among the more than 1,000 recipes in our online archive are dozens that include beans—even some for chili. You can find them all on our website.

Fabulous and Versatile Beans

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Canned beans, a pantry staple, are not only delicious, they also are extremely versatile and budget-friendly, can shine as a main dish or side, and even work in desserts.

Try these ideas to get more from your pantry beans:

Blend them into a creamy dip.

Stir some into your favorite stew.
(And they really are even OK in chili.)

Use beans as a satisfying filling for your next taco night.

Consider them as a meatless option for making burgers.

Mix into cold salads for potlucks.

Bake puréed beans into brownies for added protein.



FREDERICKSBURG
CAST IRON CO.
FBC USA



GO TEXAN.

Cast-Iron Cookware

Giveaway Contest

Enter today for your chance to win an heirloom-quality, handcrafted No. 14 "Comal" griddle or No. 12 skillet from Fredericksburg Cast Iron Co.

TCP Enter Today
[TexasCoopPower.com/contests](https://www.texascooppower.com/contests)



PERMA-ROOF
from Southern Builders

Steel Mobile Home Roofing

High energy bill?
Roof rumble?
Leaks?

Since 1983

MOBILE HOME ROOFER SYSTEMS

Contact us at **800.633.8969**
or **roofover.com**

Bank C.D.'s Due?
CALL US NOW

1-800-359-4940 TEXAS TOLL-FREE
www.mattsonfinancialservices.com

BLAKE MATTSO, CFP™
Signal Securities, Inc., 5400 Bosque, 4th Floor, Waco, TX 76710
Serving Customers All Over Texas

All C.D.'s are insured to \$250,000 per institution by the F.D.I.C. All C.D.'s are subject to availability. Securities offered thru Signal Securities, Inc., Member FINRA/SIPC 700 Throckmorton, Ft. Worth, TX 76102. (817) 877-4256.

FALL SAVINGS



Bolt Together Steel Building Kits

Customer Service
Second to None

DDM Brenham Office
979-251-9503
301 Salem Road · Brenham

DDM Bastrop Office
512-321-0336
1083 Hwy 71 W. · Bastrop

Photos for illustration only. Prices subject to change. Please check for your local buildings codes. Prices include color walls, color trim and galvalume roof.

*Building prices are before freight and taxes.



All Metal Structures



Made in Texas



Custom Barndominiums/Metal Houses

Affordable · Low Maintenance · Energy Efficient



40'x50'x12'



30'x40'x12'



Call today for our best pricing!

\$14,485-30x40x12

2-10x10 roll up doors, 1-3070 walk door

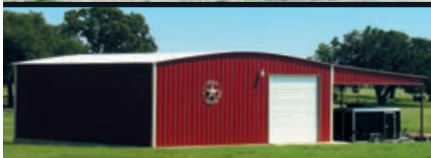
\$22,710-40x50x12

2-10x10 roll up doors, 1-3070 walk door

Freight and taxes not included in prices.

www.ddmbuildings.com

TURNKEY METAL BUILDINGS



Erected Metal Buildings • 5" Concrete Slabs • 30 Years of Experience
Instant Prices @ WDMB2.com

WE PAY TOP PRICES FOR COLLECTIBLES

Coins • Banknotes • Gold & Silver Jewelry & Scrap
Vintage Costume Jewelry • Watches • Stamps
Tokens • Historical Documents • Other Collectibles
TEXAS BUYERS GROUP • FREDERICKSBURG, TX
All transactions private, confidential & secure.

830-997-6339 • rzcoins@twc.com

Low Cost Pole Barns

26' x 48' x 10'
3 Sides Enclosed

Call now for our best pricing!

Hay/Horse Barns, Shops, Decks, Concrete Work and Pad Sites

Call Ron: 512-367-0428



ARK-LA-TEX
SHOP BUILDERS
"WE GOTCHA COVERED"
SHOPS • BARNs • CABINS • WWW.SHOPSBUILT.COM
830-730-0515
8670 IH 35 N NEW BRAUNFELS, TX




BUILDINGS OF ALL SIZES
Shops • Garages • Barns • Equipment Sheds • Barndominiums
WE MAKE DREAMS COME TRUE!

Price includes all labor and materials with 4" steel reinforced concrete slab with moisture barrier, one 10'x10' heavy duty roll up door, one 3 foot steel entry door, concrete aprons, electric stub *(Dirt may be extra)

TCP Marketplace
Across Town | Across Texas

Advertise in Texas Co-op Power Marketplace
Elaine Sproull (512) 486-6251
advertising@TexasCoopPower.com




SKID STEER MOUNTED SHEAR
• 1/2" to 6" diameter trees and brush.
• Perfect for cedar, shin oak, persimmon, mesquite.
(512) 263-6830 • www.brushshark.com



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Puffy Taco Trailblazer

Legendary Ray's Drive Inn was the first and remains the best

BY CHET GARNER

WHEN I HEAR the term “drive-in,” I immediately envision greasy cheese-burgers, thick milkshakes and smiling carhops. But Ray's Drive Inn on the west side of San Antonio isn't that kind of joint. Sure, it's full of nostalgia, an old jukebox and belly-pleasing food. But Ray's has a magical, signature dish that separates it from all others—puffy tacos. After hearing the legend, I took a day trip to the Alamo City to try them for myself.

Ray's opened in 1956 as the entrepreneurial dream of Raymond Lopez. Legend holds that one day, Ray's grandmother was frying corn masa for tostadas. She stepped away from the fryer and a wooden stick (no doubt guided by the hand of God) fell from a shelf and folded the masa into a tacolike form. The family started selling these crispy yet fluffy shells full of meat, cheese, lettuce and tomatoes. In no time, a legend was born.

After almost 70 years, the restaurant is still family owned and operated by the children of Arturo Lopez, Ray's younger brother.

I found the restaurant far from the beaten path and could smell the deep-fried tortillas as soon as I stepped out of my truck. Inside, the walls were a menagerie of family photos, taxidermy and even a neon altar to the Virgin Mary. I ordered up a platter of three puffy tacos (beef, chicken, and bean and avocado) and found a table tucked below a painting of Ray, Arturo and their three other brothers.

One bite let me know that this was unlike any taco I had ever eaten. It was crunchy but soft and perfectly greasy. I had no choice but to order a few more with different fillings. You know, for research. ■

ABOVE Chet shows a close-up of a puffy taco before making it disappear.

TCP Follow along as Chet enjoys puffy perfection. See the video on our website and see all his Explorations 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.

OCTOBER 07

Boerne Book Festival,
(830) 249-3053,
boernebookfest.com

Grapevine Celebra
Grapevine, (813) 807-3382,
latinosingrapevine.org

Huntington Catfish
Festival, (936) 635-3306,
shophuntingtontx.com

San Marcos [7-8] Sacred
Springs Powwow,
(512) 393-5930,
sspowwow.com

Weatherford [7-Dec. 2]
Spirit of the West,
(817) 599-6168,
weatherfordart.com

12

Corsicana 175th Anniver-
sary Time Capsule
Ceremony, (903) 654-4850,
corsicana175years.com

13

Albany [13-14] Living His-
tory Days, (512) 463-6100,
thc.texas.gov

Ingram [13, 15, 20-22,
26-29] Frankenstein,
(830) 367-5121, hcaf.com

14

Fredericksburg Monarch
Celebration, (830) 990-1393,
wildseedfarms.com

19

Tyler [19-22] Texas Rose
Festival, (903) 531-1212,
texasrosefestival.com

20

Brenham Brass Transit,
(979) 337-7240,
thebarnhillcenter.com

21

Cisco TX Pie Fest,
(254) 334-9621,
ciscotxpiefest.com

San Marcos Eddie Durham Jazz Fest, (512) 217-0600, facebook.com/calaboosemuseum

Waco Oakwood Cemetery's Walking Tales, (254) 717-1763, facebook.com/heartoftexasstorytellingguild

27

Galveston [27-28] Oktoberfest, (409) 762-8477, galvestonoktoberfest.com

28

Cibolo Cibolofest, (210) 619-3104, cibolotx.gov

Point Venture Holiday Bazaar, (781) 363-7161, facebook.com/pvholidaybazaar

Sanger Sellabration, (940) 458-7702, sangertexas.com

Waxahachie Texas Country Reporter Festival, (469) 309-4045, waxahachiecvb.com

31

Johnson City Trunk-or-Treat at the Square, (830) 868-7111, johnsoncitytx.org

NOVEMBER

03

Oakville Dobie Dichos, (361) 319-3067, dobedichos.com

04

Cottonwood Shores Legends of the Falls Festival, (225) 747-0730, cottonwoodshores.org

TCP *Submit Your Event*

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

CELEBRATE THE ARTS IN KERRVILLE, TX!



Kerrville Chalk Festival
October 14 - 15, 2023
www.kerrvillechalk.org

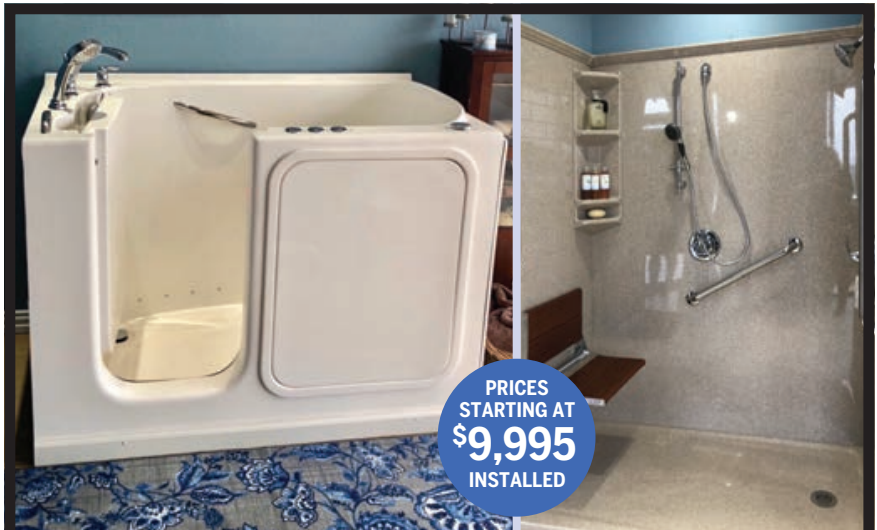


Welcome Home Fest
October 12 - 15, 2023
www.kerrvillefolkfestival.org



KERRVILLE
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

www.KerrvilleTXArts.com • 830-792-3535



PRICES
STARTING AT
\$9,995
INSTALLED



BEST BUY WALK-IN TUBS
FEATURING "SEALTITE" TECHNOLOGY

🇺🇸 SERVING TEXANS FOR 18 YEARS 🇺🇸

From \$129 per month!

- Lifetime Warranty
- Custom Sizes Available
- 100% Financing Available
- A+ BBB Rating
- Good Contractors List

Tubs and Showers Made in America
🇺🇸 Visit Our Texas Showroom 🇺🇸

bestbuywalkintubs.com • 682-205-3532 • 888-825-2362

Helping Out

From food donations to fundraising, Texans love to answer the call and lend a helping hand. Here's to all those who look out for others and embrace a challenge, rolling up their sleeves and pitching in for those in need.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 HANNAH WESTERVELT
SAN PATRICIO EC

"My son and husband working on his truck."

2 KERI NAKAMURA
TRI-COUNTY EC

"A son takes his 93-year-old mother on an evening walk."

3 BRANDON EMBRY
DEAF SMITH EC

"I always liked this photo of my grandpa with my son trailing him around. We were getting ready to harvest wheat, and my kids always liked hanging out with Pop."

4 LINDSAY HUMPHREYS
SOUTH PLAINS EC

"The beauty of raising kids in West Texas is they get to experience traditional branding and working cattle."



Upcoming Contests

- DUE OCT 10** Vibrant Color
- DUE NOV 10** Architecture
- DUE DEC 10** Pollinators



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



Noteworthy Grace

When the pandemic paused events, a tiny chapel celebrated kindness

BY SPIKE GILLESPIE
PHOTO BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

SEVERAL YEARS AGO I bought an abandoned ranch just east of Austin. I dreamed of one day converting it to a meditation center, providing space for people of all walks to gather and sit in peace.

Running a ranch, even a small one, is pricey though. So I put my dream on hold and instead created a small wedding venue, a more lucrative way to support the place.

The crown jewel was a tiny chapel I had moved here from Luling. Couples loved the rustic feel and unique beauty of the building, fashioned from reclaimed wood and antique stained glass.

During the pandemic, business fell off and grumpiness befell some of the couples who proceeded with their plans. Frustrated with how the pandemic forced unwanted change—some had to reschedule, others watched guest lists

dwindle—they sometimes took out their aggravation on me. Overwhelmed by this negativity, sometimes I snapped back.

For a spell, after a particularly enraged bride eviscerated me because of the weather, I shut down altogether. Dismayed at how joyful celebrations had become overshadowed, I knew I needed to make a change.

A flash of an idea struck me. I recalled a Vermont chapel where people make pilgrimages to honor their dogs who have passed. I remembered a little chapel in Mexico where visitors leave notes of gratitude and *milagros* (prayer offerings) for St. Francis. I dubbed my itty-bitty church the Tiny Chapel of Kindness and invited people to send stories of kindness to adorn the walls.

And they did.

Their notes run the gamut from heartwarming to heartbreaking to flat-out hilarious. One describes being saved from a car wreck by strangers. Another hails an internet stranger who sent free motorcycle parts to a fellow tinkerer. One details the discovery, late in life, of a long-lost half-brother who embraced his “new” sister wholeheartedly (the siblings had been kept secret from each other because of the sins of their father).

I had many stories of my own to share, finally settling on one. Last fall, one of my longhorns went into labor. It was a bad journey. Unable to assist her alone, I called a neighbor for help. We cried as we worked together to deliver the stillborn calf. Then he administered penicillin so the mom would survive.

Grateful visitors come to read the stories and leave notes of their own. This is not the meditation center I’d envisioned when I first laid eyes on an old run-down property, but in our own fashion, we each meditate on the power of kindness. Powerful indeed.

As I had hoped, my attitude has shifted back to positive and, inspired by others, my anger has been replaced by joy and gratitude. ■

Brand New for 2023!

2023 Pure Silver Dollars
from FIVE Countries

ADDED this Year! 2023
British Silver Britannia

This 2023 Set Includes
Two "Firsts" and a "Last!"



5 Countries,
5 Pure Silver
Coins!

Your Silver Passport to Travel the World

The 5 Most Popular Pure Silver Coins on Earth in One Set

Travel the globe, without leaving home—with this set of the world's five most popular pure silver coins. Newly struck for 2023 in one ounce of fine silver, each coin will arrive in Brilliant Uncirculated (BU) condition. Your excursion includes stops in the United States, Canada, South Africa, China and Great Britain.

We've Done the Work for You with this Extraordinary 5-Pc. World Silver Coin Set

Each of these coins is recognized for its breathtaking beauty, and for its stability even in unstable times, since each coin is backed by its government for weight, purity and legal-tender value.

2023 American Silver Eagle: The Silver Eagle is the most popular coin in the world, with its iconic Adolph Weinman Walking Liberty obverse backed by Emily Damstra's Eagle Landing reverse. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the U.S. Mint.

2023 Canada Maple Leaf: A highly sought-after bullion coin since 1988, this 2023 issue includes the FIRST and likely only use of a transitional portrait, of the late Queen Elizabeth II. These are also expected to be the LAST Maple Leafs to bear Her Majesty's effigy. Struck in high-purity 99.99% fine silver at the Royal Canadian Mint.

2023 South African Krugerrand: The Krugerrand continues to be the best-known, most respected numismatic coin brand in the world. 2023 is the Silver Krugerrand's 6th year of issue. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the South African Mint.

2023 China Silver Panda: 2023 is the 40th anniversary of the first silver Panda coin, issued in 1983. China Pandas are noted for their heart-warming one-year-only designs. Struck in 99.9% fine silver at the China Mint.

GovMint.com • 1300 Corporate Center Curve, Dept. WRD357-05, Eagan, MN 55121

2023 British Silver Britannia: One of the Royal Mint's flagship coins, this 2023 issue is the FIRST in the Silver Britannia series to carry the portrait of King Charles III, following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. Struck in 99.9% fine silver.

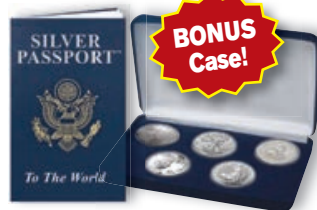


Exquisite Designs Struck in Precious Silver

These coins, with stunningly gorgeous finishes and detailed designs that speak to their country of origin, are sure to hold a treasured place in your collection. Plus, they provide you with a unique way to stock up on precious silver. Here's a legacy you and your family will cherish. Act now!

SAVE with this World Coin Set

You'll save both time and money on this world coin set with FREE shipping and a BONUS presentation case, plus a new and informative Silver Passport!



2023 World Silver 5-Coin Set Regular Price \$229 – \$199

SAVE \$30.00 (over 13%) + FREE SHIPPING

FREE SHIPPING: Standard domestic shipping. Not valid on previous purchases.

For fastest service call today toll-free

1-888-201-7070

Offer Code WRD357-05
Please mention this code when you call.

 SPECIAL CALL-IN ONLY OFFER

Not sold yet? To learn more,
place your phone camera here >>>
or visit [govmint.com/WRD](https://www.govmint.com/WRD)



GovMint.com® is a retail distributor of coin and currency issues and is not affiliated with the U.S. government. The collectible coin market is unregulated, highly speculative and involves risk. GovMint.com reserves the right to decline to consummate any sale, within its discretion, including due to pricing errors. Prices, facts, figures and populations deemed accurate as of the date of publication but may change significantly over time. All purchases are expressly conditioned upon your acceptance of GovMint.com's Terms and Conditions (www.govmint.com/terms-conditions or call 1-800-721-0320); to decline, return your purchase pursuant to GovMint.com's Return Policy. © 2023 GovMint.com. All rights reserved.

MUELLER STEEL BUILDINGS AND METAL ROOFING



READY TO BUILD YOUR DREAM?

With Mueller, you have access to a wide range of high-quality steel buildings, residential metal roofing, and components.

From complex buildings to self-storage units, from living spaces to backyard buildings, Mueller manufactures our products to ensure years of reliability. We invite you to see our many options at muellerinc.com, then call or come by one of our 36 locations.



Learn more at: www.muellerinc.com
877-2-MUELLER (877-268-3553)

SAVE A WATT



AN ENERGY EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION EVENT

HOSTED BY



Nueces Electric Cooperative



EDUCATIONAL
INFORMATION



DOOR PRIZES



FREE REFRESHMENTS
& MORE



ENTERTAINMENT
FOR KIDS



VENDORS



GATHER WITH OTHER
MEMBER-OWNERS



9 AM - 12 PM

SATURDAY

11 | 04 | 23

NEC HEADQUARTERS ROBSTOWN OFFICE
14353 COOPERATIVE AVE, ROBSTOWN, TX

WANT TO LEARN HOW TO SAVE ON YOUR
MONTHLY ELECTRIC BILL?

LEARN FROM THE PROFESSIONALS AT NEC!

ENERGIZING YOUR FUTURE



TODAY, TOMORROW, & ONWARD



Nueces Electric Cooperative

"NEC employees demonstrate every day that they are committed and dedicated to safety and service. We can't thank them enough for their essential role in keeping our co-op energized for the future."

Varzavand "Avan" Irani, NEC CEO

