

REMEMBERING THAT
FIRST LIGHT BULB

DON'T MIND THOSE
ALLIGATORS

WINDMILLER KEEPS
WITS IN A PINCH

Texas Coop Power

FOR FAYETTE EC MEMBERS

AUGUST 2024

On the Road Again

A photographer
piles on the miles to
capture rural Texas

I'm thinking more today about how to protect the money I've earned.

I've learned a lot of things over the years, talking to all sorts of experts in all sorts of fields. But one of the most important lessons I learned was from two former Directors of the U.S. Mint, who taught me everything I needed to know about the importance of protecting my savings with physical gold and silver.

In 25 years of working dirty jobs, the thought of a diversified portfolio really didn't cross my mind—but the more I learn, the better I feel about buying gold and silver from U.S. Money Reserve.

Is gold right for you? That's not for me to say. You've got to do your own due diligence. All I know is that today, it's not enough to simply work hard—you also have to save smart. So, call the number below. The folks at U.S. Money Reserve are standing by to help.



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August 2024



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Over five decades of crisscrossing Texas, a photographer learns to slow down to really see.

Photo essay by Wyatt McSpadden

In the Beginning

Few recall when electric co-ops lit up the countryside; Katie Phillips remembers every bit of her dad's life-changing work.

*Story by Tom Widlowski
Photo by Caytlyn Calhoun*

ON THE COVER

On the way north to Amarillo, just after crossing the Prairie Dog Town Fork of the Red River.
Photo by Wyatt McSpadden

ABOVE

Katie Phillips enjoys quilting—and air conditioning, ample lighting and watching TV.
Photo by Caytlyn Calhoun

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FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Young Photographers

RECOMMENDED READING
True or false: People used to believe you could dynamite rain out of the sky. They sure did, as we explained in *Rain, You Blasted Sky!* from August 2013.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

I can't wait to learn ...

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 June prompt: **The next book you should read is ...**

The Time It Never Rained by Elmer Kelton. You will laugh. You will also cry.

JANIS HAGAN
NAVARRO COUNTY EC
CORNICANA

The Madstone by Elizabeth Crook. An amazing historical novel based in Texas just after the Civil War.

SUSAN ERVIN
PEDERNALES EC
GEORGETOWN

The Women by Kristin Hannah. An eye-opening book about the women of Vietnam.

DANI MACNEIL
BANDERA EC
PIPE CREEK

Visit our website to see more responses.

Rural Showcase

OVER THE NEXT YEAR, seven Texas cities will host a Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition that examines the evolution of small towns as the American population moved into urban areas over the past 125 years.

Crossroads: Change in Rural America debuts August 24 in San Augustine. After six weeks in deep East Texas, the exhibition will move on to weekslong stays in Clifton, Brenham, Rockport, Buffalo Gap and San Elizario. The tour through Texas will end in Bandera on August 2, 2025.

To learn more, visit museumonmainstreet.org.



August 20
World Mosquito Day

Don't forget to celebrate **World Mosquito Day**. Wait, maybe not. Scratch that.

JUNE 2024 We Brake for Steak

“Chet Garner needs to go back to the Leona General Store on Thursday nights, when it’s just some of the best catfish anywhere.”

DARRELL HUTTO
 NAVASOTA VALLEY EC
 JEWETT



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Traveling South, Traveling East

I loved the idea of emotional healing by traveling to every state park [Trailblazer, June 2024]. I was a little disappointed that no South Texas parks were mentioned.

My favorite story in the issue was *Renewal in Blue*. I traveled to East Texas with the young girl and loved the ending with the bluebonnets.

Penny Brown
 Magic Valley EC
 Rio Hondo

Multiplying at the Sixes

As an avid fan of the *Yellowstone* TV series, it was captivating to learn about the Burnett family and how the Four Sixes Ranch began and grew into one of the 10 largest ranches in the state [Sixes on the Small Screen, May 2024].

Sarah Brown
 Bluebonnet EC
 Cedar Creek



B.J. HINKLE

Avenging Uncle

James Franklin Norfleet was my great-uncle [Payback Time, May 2024]. I remember when we would visit the Norfleets at their home in Hale County in the 1950s, and Aunt Eliza would regale us with stories of earlier days.

Uncle Frank awed us kids as he would always strap on his pistol belt before going outside. For kids growing up listening to *The Lone Ranger*, we were quite impressed.

Jim K. Hudgins
 San Bernard EC
 Bellville

Roadside Attractions

It seems to me that Michael Ford has discovered and perfected a new art form on the Texas landscape [Overpass Easels, May 2024]. His work is extremely expressive of Texas and unique in each example.

Mary E. Specia
 GVEC
 McQueeney

TCP WRITE TO US
 letters@TexasCoopPower.com

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

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Open Roads, Open Eyes

Over five decades
of crisscrossing Texas,
a photographer learns
to slow down to really see





PHOTO ESSAY BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

When I was younger and living in Amarillo, it always seemed important to get where I was going and back as soon as possible.

For a few years after a divorce, my two boys and their mom lived in San Marcos. And so a couple of times a month, I'd make that 500-plus mile drive as fast as I could.

When I abandoned the Panhandle and moved to Austin, my freelance photography business kicked into a higher gear. The jobs were in every direction, in and around my new city.

I never griped about the mileage, but as I matured, I did start listening to my eyes. I made it a rule that if I saw something that caught my attention at 70 mph and I couldn't get it out of my mind after a couple miles, I'd go back to get a picture—or at least to visit and decide if what I saw was worth a return trip at a particular time of day.

The drives are much more mellow these days after 50 years as a professional photographer, and I navigate using a spiral-bound detail map of Texas counties. Driving seems to be the second-most important skill in my line of work.

Of course, skill No. 1 is making a good picture upon reaching my destination. Most often the job involves capturing a portrait of someone who has accomplished something a magazine editor thinks is worthy of a story. But sometimes it's capturing the feel, the presence of a place.

I'm pretty sure I've driven a million miles in Texas, but now I do it a mile at a time. That's how the pictures in these pages were made, driving slow(ish), with eyes wide open. ■

I know my way around the Amarillo area, having lived there until I was 40. I was joyriding and admiring the late-day clouds when the lonely little tree appeared on the horizon.



Early morning on the road between Earth and Dimmit, in the Panhandle, familiar territory from my early years making a living shooting for seed and cattle operations. I hadn't seen such a tall silage mound, and the man with his pitchfork caught my eye.





I was passing through Hico on my way to the Metroplex when I spotted this little house. It took some coaxing for the woman to pose.





ABOVE I have a collection of barbed wire, plastic and wind pictures. Artsy pictures of trash.

LEFT A blue Dodge seems to have a permanent parking spot between Sandy Fork and Luling.

OPPOSITE A classic farmhouse, newly plowed field and epic sky near Granger, in Williamson County. Irresistible.



In the Beginning

**Few recall when electric cooperatives lit up the countryside;
Katie Phillips remembers every bit of her dad's life-changing work**

Katie Phillips is old enough to remember the dark ages—when nightfall at her family's farm outside Coleman meant navigating by the shadowy illumination offered by carbide and coal-oil lamps and lanterns. When much of the work on her dad's dairy farm—milking, separating and bottling—happened before sunrise and without the benefit of electricity.

"It's a hard life," says Katie, who turns 97 next month. For her and her brother and two sisters growing up in the 1930s, there wasn't much free time for fun, and before electricity, there was no reading or playing games at night.

Milking started every day at 3 a.m., and a few hours later, Katie's dad, Charlie Pitts, was making the first of his twice-

daily deliveries of Oak Grove Dairy Farm milk to homes, stores and cafés around Coleman, south of Abilene, on the western Central Texas plains.

It never escaped Pitts' notice that just 4½ miles east, in town, folks had the luxury of electricity.

Back then in rural America, those 4½ miles might as well have been a million. Electricity stopped where the profits did, and in 1936, fewer than 3% of Texas farms had electricity.

But before long, farmers, ranchers and their neighbors

Katie Phillips' dad helped create Coleman County Electric Cooperative. She saw the co-op's first light bulb flicker on in 1937.

Katie remembers the first appliance in the house—a two-door refrigerator picked up at Gray Mercantile in town. It meant no more lugging ice home.

pooled their money and worked together to build the electric cooperatives that lit up the countryside and brought a better quality of life.

Katie Phillips is among few living Americans who witnessed that important history. She had a front-row seat.

Katie turned 9 in 1936, the year her dad became a local leader in the cooperative movement that was in its early stages.

In those days, the town of Coleman had not only electricity but phone service too, and Pitts realized he needed that to keep up with milk orders. To get it, he paid to have a line strung from Coleman, across a creek, to the farm. Katie remembers their party line phone number: 4-0-0.

“I always wanted something better,” Pitts told the family.

Getting electricity to the farm was another matter.

Pitts traveled to Washington, D.C., to learn about the Rural Electrification Administration, which provided loans for the creation of cooperatives. He then visited neighboring farms, asking folks to contribute \$5 to help start a co-op.

Finally, in April 1937, the first Coleman County Electric Cooperative light bulb flickered on in the Pitts farmhouse—an honor befitting the co-op’s first board president.

“It was a great day for everybody because it was a completion of a long journey for Daddy,” Katie says. The Pitts kids had better lighting for their schoolwork, and Dad had a perfect place to read the Fort Worth newspaper he always had in the house.

Soon lines brought power to the dairy barn, where milking machines freed up farmhands.

Katie remembers the first appliance in the house—a two-door refrigerator picked up at Gray Mercantile in town. It meant no more lugging ice home. “I just know that it was one of the most wonderful feelings there was when we could go to that refrigerator and open both doors and look in there and see what was in it,” Katie says.

Decades later, Katie spends a lot of her days knitting under a lamp in a corner of her living room in a 100-year-old farmhouse 6 miles east of Coleman. Electricity is too commonplace to warrant much thought. It powers her iPhone, tablet, two TVs and brand-new Singer sewing machine.

She’s known around Coleman County EC for being there at the dawn of the co-op. When the co-op held its 85th annual meeting in July 2023, she was there, and it was her 85th annual meeting too. She has attended every last one.

“The first light bulb was the beginning of an amazing future for all of us,” says Synda Smith, the co-op’s CEO and

general manager. “There are few businesses that have a past connection like this. It feels so good to know that Katie still feels like we are doing what our earlier leaders wanted us to do by continuing to uphold the co-op business model.”

Katie has farmed most of her life around Coleman, except for two years in high school at Our Lady of the Lake in San Antonio. She dated Harold Phillips for a little less than a year—sometimes on horseback—and they married in 1948 when she was 21.

Together they farmed for 66 years, until he died in 2014. Harold was one of the first farmers in the area to grow sunflowers and to use parallel terracing. They had five children, four of whom are still living—all within five miles of Katie. Two of the sons are farmers.

By her 50th wedding anniversary, Katie figured she was ready to give up farming, and she broke that news to Harold.

“I told him, ‘I think I’ve done enough now,’ ” Katie says. “And he said, ‘What would encourage you to do a little more?’

“I said, ‘You buy me an air-conditioned, four-wheel-drive tractor.’ ”

And that’s how she ended up the proud owner of a John Deere tractor that’s still in the family.

Katie, who says she needed no prescriptions until she turned 90, has other family heirlooms that she holds dear: A six-leaf table brought by covered wagon from Louisiana by Katie’s great-grandparents in the mid-1800s graces her dining room, and there’s a couple of glider-style chairs that her mother bought in New York and the chair her dad used to rock her to sleep.

But the greatest treasure might be Charlie Pitts’ old desk chair, the very one where he worked out the wrinkles and legal details of creating the electric utility that gave his kids—and his community—a brighter future.

And Katie still has a direct connection to the co-op office in town. One of her six grandchildren, Kathreyn Portis, is a member services representative at Coleman County EC, where she has worked almost four years.

“My family’s legacy in this county is a big one, so to get to be able to continue that means a lot to me,” Portis says. “Family isn’t just blood relatives. It’s these people,” she says of her three dozen colleagues at the co-op.

They all follow in the footsteps of a dairy farmer who wanted to leave the dark ages behind.

As Katie knits or quilts or watches her beloved Dallas Cowboys, she joins nearly 5,000 fellow co-op members in her community living a better life because of co-op power.

But she alone remembers that day in 1937 when her dad helped that first light bulb come on.

“It was magical,” Katie says. “It’s just the greatest thing in the world. When he found out that you could get electricity, he said, ‘We’re going to do it.’ ” ■



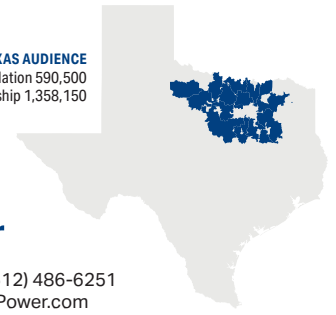
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The stainless steel blade, bolster and pommel are exquisitely etched and would have looked great with a less ambitious handle. But the results of overachieving are stunning here. The turquoise-blue colored handle is ablaze with assorted stones like jasper, marble, sunstone, and coral that have been hand cut and inlaid in a Southwestern motif.

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MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT DAVID LEHMANN

Fayette EC Names New General Manager

FAYETTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE is pleased to announce the appointment of Doug Lambert as its new general manager, a decision facilitated by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Executive Search service. Lambert’s extensive experience in the electric cooperative industry and leadership acuity ensure a seamless transition and continued success for the cooperative.

Lambert brings a distinguished background, having held various positions at rural electric cooperatives within Texas, along with his recent work on research and marketing projects with NRECA. His deep knowledge, education and Texas upbringing make him ideally suited to lead Fayette EC into its next growth and service excellence phase.

As your board president, I am confident in Lambert’s appointment. The board of directors and I would like to thank Jean Brandt, NRECA Executive Search, for facilitating the search for our new GM. We are confident that Lambert will provide the type of leadership that will continue to move us forward in serving our members in the future.

Lambert shared his enthusiasm for the opportunity. “I am deeply honored by the trust placed in me by the board of directors at Fayette Electric to serve our valued members and dedicated employees,” Lambert said. “I am committed to upholding the esteemed traditions and legacy that have been established at FEC while strategically positioning our cooperative for a prosperous future. Together, we will continue to deliver reliable and affordable power, ensuring that our member-owned cooperative thrives for generations to come.”

Lambert’s career includes over 20 years in executive leadership roles, including at San Bernard Electric Cooperative in Bellville. His experience with the deregulation of markets and his understanding of leveraging deregulated power supply for member benefits position him well for this role.

Lambert has a proven track record of managing complex operations, developing strategic plans, fostering collaborative relationships and implementing innovative solutions.

As product manager at NRECA, Lambert was responsible for developing and articulating a clear vision aligned with corporate strategy, staying current with market trends, and conducting thorough customer research. His experience managing complex federal research projects has provided him with valuable insights that will contribute to FEC’s mission of enhancing the quality of life in the communities it serves.

Lambert possesses numerous leadership competencies, including a vision for the organization’s future needs, the ability to lead change and manage risk, exceptional communication skills, and a strong focus on safety. His commitment to workforce development, performance management and a strong member focus aligns with FEC’s values and objectives.

He holds a certificate in electric power technology with a focus on system operations and a Bachelor of

Applied Science in energy management. Additionally, he completed NRECA’s Management Internship Program, which prepares managers for executive leadership roles with rural electric cooperatives.

Lambert is relocating back to Texas from North Carolina with his wife, Michelle, who manages memberships for a non-profit organization dedicated to education and training for rural hospitals and doctors. Lambert considers this move an opportunity to return home and continue his dedicated service to

the electric cooperative community. He and his wife have two daughters: Jamie, a junior at East Carolina University, and Kendle, who works in Garden City, Kansas, with soon-to-be son-in-law Todd.

Fayette EC looks forward to Lambert’s leadership in providing reliable and affordable power to its members. He replaces General Manager Gary Don Nietzsche, who retired July 1 after 43 years of service to the cooperative. ■



General Manager Doug Lambert



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Paying the Price of Power Theft

IT'S OFTEN AN “invisible” crime. Someone illegally hooks into a power supply, hooks up a line that has been disconnected or tampers with a meter to avoid recording electricity usage. Often the impact of electricity theft—including the danger—is unrecognized in the short term.

But power theft carries deadly risks. Many thieves pay for the power they steal with their lives—or with the lives of others. Thieves can unknowingly feed energy back into power lines, endangering lineworkers, who might assume the line they’re working on is de-energized.

Electricity theft makes power service less reliable for paying customers. It also makes the electricity you use more expensive because honest members have to pick up the tab for the stolen electricity and damage to cooperative equipment.

Fayette Electric Cooperative wants your help in preventing and reducing power theft. **Here’s how:**

- ▶ Notify your electric cooperative immediately if you know of an illegally connected consumer.
- ▶ Do not cut the seal on your meter base or tamper with your own meter.
- ▶ Apply for a legal connection if you don’t have one.
- ▶ Remain aware of your surroundings and report any suspicious activities.

Most electrical theft crimes occur through meter tampering, bypassing meters and tapping power lines. Other less frequent crimes include tapping into neighboring premises, self-reconnection without consent, using illegal lines after disconnection and electrifying fences.

Everyone is affected by power theft, and detecting and reporting illegal activity will help reduce the price we all pay. ■

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INSULATION 101

1

ATTIC

Attic insulation can improve your home's comfort and energy savings. Recommended R-value ranges from R-30 in warm climates to R-60 in cold climates.

2

DUCTWORK

Protect the air you paid to heat or cool by insulating your ductwork from R-4 to R-11 where it travels through unconditioned spaces.

3

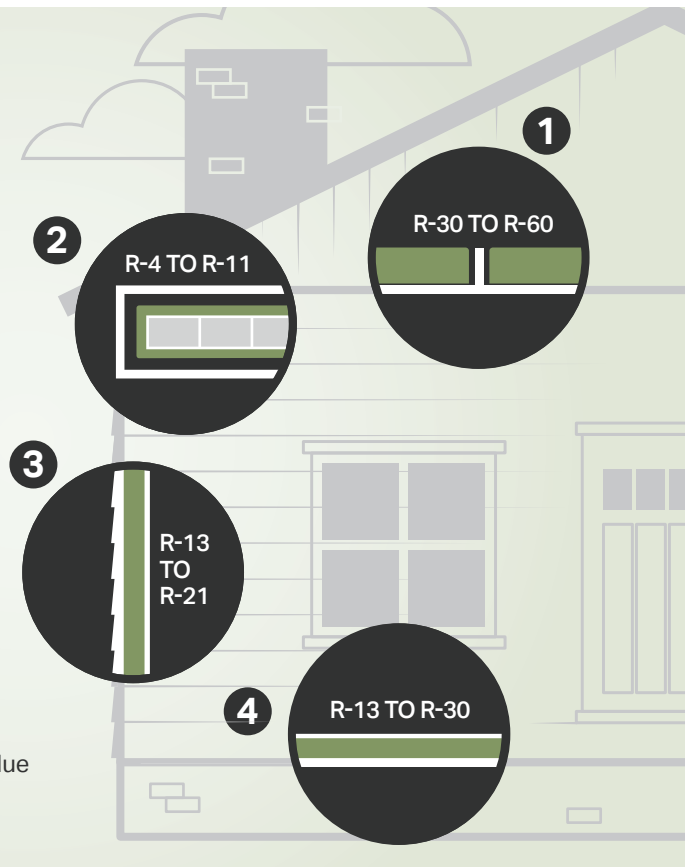
EXTERIOR WALLS

Exterior walls should be insulated between R-13 and R-21, depending on wall construction and your location.

4

CRAWL SPACE

Increase comfort and energy savings in your home by insulating the floors to the right R-value for your location, ranging from R-13 to R-30.



Insulation Made Easy

INSULATION AND AIR SEALING typically provide the biggest bang for your buck when it comes to home energy efficiency improvements. When installed together, they can save you money and make a big difference in comfort and energy use.

Insulation Rating

Insulation is rated in R-value. The R stands for resistance to heat transfer. The higher your R-value, the slower the heat transfer, resulting in less wasted energy.

Where to Insulate

The typical locations for insulation are the attic, walls and floor. If you have a forced-air heating or cooling system, your ductwork should be insulated, too. You want a consistent thermal barrier around your home for maximum efficiency.

Attic insulation minimizes energy waste and can help maintain a more consistent temperature throughout your home.

Attics can be insulated using batts or blown-in insulation. Recommended R-values range from R-30 to R-60. If you use your attic for storage, you can build a raised platform with room for insulation underneath. Add insulation and weatherstripping to access doors or hatches.

Exterior walls and walls separating heated and unheated areas of the home—such as garages or enclosed porches—should be insulated to an R-value ranging from R-13 to R-21, based on your location and wall construction.

Wall insulation can be installed during construction or a remodel. If your home wasn't insulated when it was built, you can have the insulation blown in by a contractor.

Your home should also be insulated between the floor and crawl space with an R-value of between R-13 and R-30.

Importance of Air Sealing

Air sealing prevents drafts and air infiltration from outside. It can improve efficiency, comfort and indoor air quality.

Air sealing can be done as a DIY project, but it's challenging to pinpoint and properly seal air leaks. Consider hiring a contractor to complete a blower door test and seal leaks.

Typically, air sealing is done around plumbing and electrical penetrations with spray foam or caulk. If using spray foam around gas appliances, temporarily turn off pilot lights. Spray foam is extremely flammable.

DIY Considerations

If you're considering a DIY approach, wear a properly fitted mask or respirator around insulation. Wearing a Tyvek suit and gloves also is recommended. Kneepads can come in handy and make the crawling more bearable.

Before going the DIY route, get estimates from two or three contractors. Sometimes a contractor can do the job for less. ■

On Board With Boating



Did you know that more people die from falling off small boats (16 feet and under) than larger ones and that hunting or fishing from a boat elevates that risk?

Here are some tips for accident-free boating:

Be weather wise. Bring a portable radio to check weather reports.

Bring extra gear you may need. A flashlight and extra batteries, matches, map, flares, and first aid kit should be kept in a water-tight container.

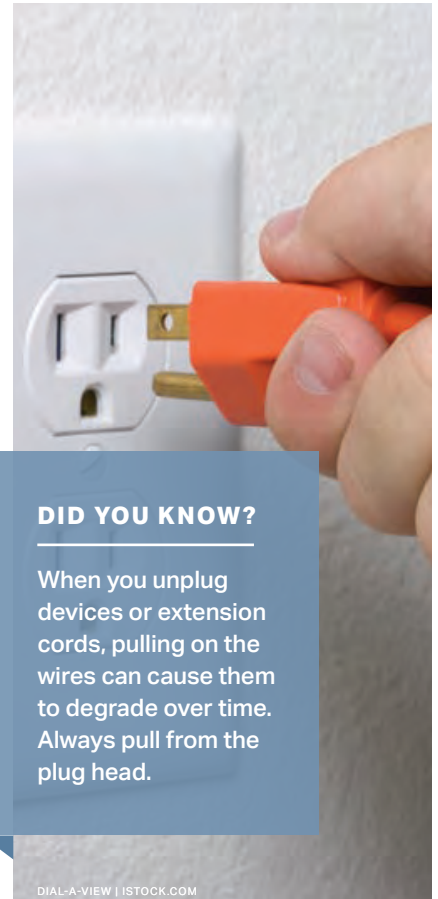
Tell someone where you're going, who is with you and how long you'll be gone.

Ventilate after fueling. Open the hatches and run the blower to clear gasoline fumes before starting your engine.

Anchor from the bow and use an anchor line at least five times longer than the water depth.

Know your boat's capacity. Don't overload it or put an oversized motor on it.

Fayette EC encourages you to always practice safety.



DID YOU KNOW?

When you unplug devices or extension cords, pulling on the wires can cause them to degrade over time. Always pull from the plug head.

DIAL-A-VIEW | ISTOCK.COM



POWER TIP

Before you dry a load of damp clothing, toss in a clean, dry towel with the load. The towel will absorb excess moisture, shortening the drying time.

МИХАИЛ РУДЕНКО | ISTOCK.COM

Create a 'Keep-Cool' Strategy for Summer

SAVING MONEY on air conditioning bills is more likely to work if you have a strategy.

Plan an approach for keeping your home cool this summer without breaking the bank. **Here are five tips:**

Get a qualified service technician to give the once-over to your central AC system and window units. A well-tuned air conditioner will operate in the most energy-efficient way.

Set your thermostat to 78 degrees while you're home and higher before you leave the house. If you have a programmable thermostat, it can adjust itself.

Turn ceiling fans on when you enter a room and off when you leave. A ceiling fan only moves the air around so anyone in the room will feel cooler. There's no benefit to running a fan when nobody is around.

Close your drapes or blinds to block the heat when it's sunny outside, but leave them open on cloudy days to get some natural daylight into your rooms.

Avoid cooking inside on hot summer days. Instead, grill outdoors, serve cold dishes, order takeout or heat food in the microwave. ■



FOTOSTORM | ISTOCK.COM



PIVAPHATEO | ISTOCK.COM

New EPA Power Plant Rules Threaten Grid Reliability

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY released four major new regulations for the electric industry this year, including a much-anticipated rule to cut emissions from power plants, a sweeping move that will aggravate reliability concerns for electric cooperatives and other utilities nationwide.

“The path outlined by the EPA is unlawful, unrealistic and unachievable,” said Jim Matheson, CEO of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. “It undermines electric reliability and poses grave consequences for an already stressed electric grid.”

The power plant rule constrains existing coal and new natural gas plants by requiring them to install carbon capture and storage technology that is not yet reliable or commercially available.

“The new EPA rules ignore our nation’s ongoing electric reliability challenges and are the wrong approach at a critical time for our nation’s energy future,” Matheson said.

The power plant rule will force the early closure of electricity generation sources and impede the construction of new natural gas plants. The timing of these sweeping new rules is particularly troubling as electric utilities face a surge in demand for electricity due to factors like transportation electrification and the rapid expansion of data centers to support artificial intelligence, e-commerce and cryptocurrency.

Electric cooperatives understand the need to keep the lights on at a cost local families and businesses can afford. Clean energy technologies must be balanced with generation sources to ensure a reliable electric grid.

Electric cooperatives like Fayette Electric Cooperative deliver power to 42 million Americans. Our top priority is to meet our members’ energy needs, and we must have reliable electricity available to do that. ■

TEXAS DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Hurricane Preparedness Guidelines

Hurricane Season Is June 1–November 30

Preparedness Checklist

- ▶ **Make an evacuation plan.** Find activated evacuation routes at [DriveTexas.org](https://www.drivetexas.org) or by dialing 1-800-452-9292. Call 211 to find out if you live in an evacuation zone.
- ▶ **Sign up for emergency alerts.** Make sure your mobile device is enabled to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- ▶ **Prepare an emergency supply kit.** Learn how to build an emergency kit at [ready.gov/build-a-kit](https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Review your home insurance policy.**
- ▶ **Register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry** at [stear.tdem.texas.gov](https://www.stear.tdem.texas.gov) or by dialing 211 if you live in an evacuation zone and:
 - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have a car or other vehicle to use in an evacuation.
 - Have a disability or medical needs and do not have friends or family to help in an evacuation.

Information collected for STEAR is confidential.

Hurricane Preparedness Online Resources

Texas Division of Emergency Management: [tdem.texas.gov](https://www.tdem.texas.gov)
Texas Department of State Health Services: [texasready.gov](https://www.texasready.gov)
American Red Cross: [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org)
U.S. Department of Homeland Security: [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)
Office of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott: [gov.texas.gov](https://www.gov.texas.gov)

DIVISIÓN DE ADMINISTRACIÓN DE EMERGENCIAS DE TEXAS

Preparación para huracanes

La temporada de huracanes es del 1 de junio al 30 de noviembre

Lista de verificación de preparación:

- ▶ **Haga un plan de evacuación.** Encuentre rutas de evacuación activadas en [DriveTexas.org](https://www.drivetexas.org) o marcando 1-800-452-9292. Llame al 211 para averiguar si usted vive en una zona de evacuación.
- ▶ **Regístrese para recibir alertas de emergencia.** Asegúrese de que su dispositivo móvil esté habilitado para recibir Alertas de emergencia inalámbricas.
- ▶ **Prepare un kit de emergencia.** Aprenda como construir un kit de emergencia en [ready.gov/build-a-kit](https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit).
- ▶ **Revise su póliza de seguro de hogar.**
- ▶ **Regístrese con el Registro de Asistencia de Emergencia del Estado de Texas** en [stear.tdem.texas.gov](https://www.stear.tdem.texas.gov) o marcando el 211 si vive en una zona de evacuación y:
 - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene un auto u otro vehículo para usar en una evacuación.
 - Tiene una discapacidad o necesidades médicas y no tiene amigos o familiares para ayudar en una evacuación.

La información recolectada para STEAR es confidencial.

Recursos en línea para la preparación para huracanes

División de Administración de Emergencias de Texas: [tdem.texas.gov](https://www.tdem.texas.gov)
Departamento de Servicios de Salud del Estado: [texasready.gov](https://www.texasready.gov)
Cruz Roja Americana: [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org)
Departamento de Seguridad Nacional de los Estados Unidos: [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov)
Oficina del Gobernador de Texas Greg Abbott: [gov.texas.gov](https://www.gov.texas.gov)

DEEPBLUE4YOU | ISTOCK.COM

Nighttime Energy Use Helps Reliability

INSTEAD OF RUNNING your dishwasher right after dinner, consider waiting until bedtime to turn it on. Same with the clothes dryer. And how about charging your phone and other rechargeables while you sleep?

Most people use their electric appliances at the same times every day: early in the morning, when they're getting ready for work; right after dinner; and at midday. That means there's a lot of demand on a limited amount of electrical capacity all at the same time.

In the summer—when everyone's also running their air conditioner—that can tax the electrical system. It can even bring about a rotating outage, although that's rare. But it could put so much pressure on the grid that new power plants will be needed, and that's expensive.

A better solution: Spread your energy use out. Do the laundry and the dishes at midmorning, while everyone else is at work, or late at night, when most people are sleeping. ■



DAVID SUCCY | ISTOCK.COM

Cool Tips for Hot Weather

It's another hot Texas summer—time to enjoy all the outdoors has to offer. While in the heat, pay attention to your body so you can enjoy each day. Follow these tips to keep your cool:

Take frequent cooling-off breaks in the shade or air conditioning.

Drink plenty of water before starting any outdoor activity and during the day, and avoid caffeine and alcohol.

Wear lightweight, loose-fitting, light-colored clothes.

Kids, cars and heat make a deadly combination. Never leave a child—or pet—in a vehicle, even for just a few minutes.

If someone exhibits symptoms of a heatstroke, act rapidly: Remove excess clothing and lower the person's temperature with wet sheets or a cool bath. Get them to the nearest hospital.

Fayette EC encourages you to always practice safety.

Become a Fan of Your Fans

BY BECOMING AN aficionado of your ceiling fan, you can save money on your electric bill.

Ceiling fans create a wind chill effect on your skin to make you feel a bit cooler. Raise the thermostat a few degrees and turn on fans to reduce air conditioning costs—which make up a big part of your electric bill.

Set fan blades to rotate counterclockwise during summer months and clockwise during winter months. Remember, ceiling fans cool people but don't actually lower the indoor temperature. Turn them off when you leave the room. If your fan has a light fixture, consider using an LED bulb, and remember to turn off the light when you're not using it.

Ceiling fan design has come a long way with myriad aesthetic and functional options. You can find ceiling fans big and small with lights, dimmable lights, remote controls, stylish blades, flush-mounts and down-rods. Smart ceiling fans allow you to control the device with a cellphone app.

There are even outdoor ceiling fans designed for patios, porches and pergolas. Turning the outdoor ceiling fan on can help cool you off outside on hot summer days. ■



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Highlights of the meeting along with a listing of the door prize winners will be featured in the September issue of *Texas Co-op Power* magazine.

SACRED STONE OF THE SOUTHWEST IS ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION



Centuries ago, Persians, Tibetans and Mayans considered turquoise a gemstone of the heavens, believing the striking blue stones were sacred pieces of sky. Today, the rarest and most valuable turquoise is found in the American Southwest— but the future of the blue beauty is unclear.

On a recent trip to Tucson, we spoke with fourth generation turquoise traders who explained that less than five percent of turquoise mined worldwide can be set into jewelry and only about twenty mines in the Southwest supply gem-quality turquoise. Once a thriving industry, many Southwest mines have run dry and are now closed.

We found a limited supply of turquoise from Arizona and purchased it for our *Sedona Turquoise Collection*. Inspired by the work of those ancient craftsmen and designed to showcase the exceptional blue stone, each stabilized vibrant cabochon features a unique, one-of-a-kind matrix surrounded in Bali metalwork. You could drop over \$1,200 on a turquoise pendant, or you



could secure 26 carats of genuine Arizona turquoise for just \$99.

Your satisfaction is 100% guaranteed. If you aren't completely happy with your purchase, send it back within 30 days for a complete refund of the item price.

The supply of Arizona turquoise is limited, don't miss your chance to own the Southwest's brilliant blue treasure. Call today!

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| C. 1 1/2" Earrings (10 ctw) | \$299 * | \$99 | +s&p | Save \$200 |
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Sense and Humor

LBJ's unique penchant for storytelling helped him navigate politics

BY W.F. STRONG

WHEN MOST PEOPLE think of Lyndon B. Johnson, they don't necessarily envision a man with a great sense of humor. After all, he was president during turbulent times.

"When the burdens of the presidency seem unusually heavy," he once joked, "I always remind myself it could be worse. I could be a mayor."

Though he didn't have the public eloquence of Kennedy or King, he was charismatic. He was a wonderful storyteller.

Writer and historian Doris Kearns Goodwin worked closely with the president for seven years, and because of her professional relationship with him, I would argue that her biography—out of all the biographies about the 36th presi-

dent—is the most humanizing.

No writer knew him better.

Goodwin told me she never tired of listening to him, though eventually she came to realize that his stories were not all completely true. Some were apocryphal, she said, and like Abraham Lincoln, LBJ used stories to animate his points, skewer his adversaries, and amuse and entertain.

He learned his storytelling, Goodwin said, from his father and grandfather, growing up in the Hill Country. Johnson would listen at night as they talked politics on the porch with local power brokers.

My own father, a great admirer of the president, shared a couple of LBJ stories with me long ago.

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



When Barry Goldwater and Nelson Rockefeller were campaigning to win their party's nomination for president in 1964, LBJ heard that both men were "cutting way back on their visits to California." Johnson said, "Reminds me of a case in Texas where a man wanted to run for sheriff against an unpopular incumbent named Uncle Johnny.

"Man asked his friend Dave if he thought he had a chance. Dave said, 'Well, I guess it depends on who meets the most people.' 'Yeah, that's what I was thinking,' said the man. Dave explained further, 'If he meets the most people, you'll win, and if you meet the most people, he'll win.'"

LBJ also told of a "boy in Texas who was very poor and tired of seeing his mama struggling so much to feed her family. So he sent a letter to God asking for \$100 for his mama. The letter got forwarded eventually to the postmaster general in Washington, D.C.

"He took pity on the boy and put \$20 in an envelope and mailed it to him. Two weeks later, the postmaster got a letter back from the boy that said, 'Dear God, thank you for sending the money, but next time don't send it through Washington cuz they took 80% of it.'"

Goodwin said she was happy to see that LBJ is getting long-deserved credit for the laws and policies he passed in his time, like the Voting Rights Act, as well as the institutions he helped found, like NASA and the Public Broadcasting Service.

If only he could have known how much progress his work would bring. He certainly would have smiled—and had a story ready. ■

Party Drinks

Find fruity refreshments—and a guide for mocktail options

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

Spending every summer in Mexico growing up, nothing made me happier than sipping on a tall glass of *agua de sandía* (watermelon water) sold by local street vendors. It's a bright and refreshing drink made from watermelon, water, lime juice and sugar. August is peak watermelon season in Texas, so I'm excited to share this beloved drink from my childhood.



Agua de Sandía

8 cups diced watermelon

4 cups cold water

¼ cup sugar

Juice of 1 lime

Tajín, for the rim

Lime wedge, for the rim

1. Blend watermelon and water until smooth. Depending on the size of your blender, you may need to divide this into batches, blending half the watermelon and half the water at a time.
2. Strain into a pitcher. Stir in sugar and lime juice.
3. Spread Tajín on a plate. Run lime wedge around the rim of each glass and dip into Tajín. Serve over ice in Tajín-rimmed glasses.

SERVES 8

TCP Follow Vianney Rodriguez as she cooks in Cocina Gris at [sweetlifelife.com](https://www.sweetlifelife.com), where she features a recipe for Hibiscus Mint Tequila Punch.



Lemon Pucker Martini

DEBI OROZCO
BRYAN TEXAS UTILITIES

I love a lightly sweet but bold-flavored cocktail, and that's exactly what this Lemon Pucker Martini recipe offers. It's a perfect balance between tart and sweet and proves incredibly refreshing.

2 tablespoons sugar, for the rim
1 lemon wedge, for the rim
2 ounces vodka
1 ounce fresh lemon juice
½ ounce limoncello
½ ounce orange-flavored liqueur
1 teaspoon agave
Lemon slice, for garnish

1. Spread sugar on a plate. Run lemon wedge around the rim of a cocktail glass and dip into sugar. Place glass in the freezer until ready to serve.
2. Add vodka, lemon juice, limoncello, orange-flavored liqueur and agave to a cocktail shaker filled with ice. Shake vigorously.
3. Strain into chilled, sugar-rimmed cocktail glass. Garnish with lemon slice.

SERVES 1

MORE RECIPES >



\$500 WINNER

Summer Beer

CINDY JARROTT
BLUEBONNET EC



Pour, stir, serve and sip!
 A beer-based cocktail fit for a crowd, this simple summer beer is a fresh and smooth beverage that's designed for batching in bulk.

SERVES 6

1 can frozen pink lemonade (12 ounces)
12 ounces vodka
4 cans light beer (12 ounces each)
Frozen mixed berries, for garnish

1. Add frozen lemonade and vodka to a pitcher. (You can use the lemonade can to measure 12 ounces of vodka.) Stir until lemonade is dissolved.
2. Add beer and stir to combine.
3. Pour into ice-filled glasses and top with frozen berries.

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

HEARTY SOUPS DUE AUGUST 10

When it's cold outside, we want nothing more than to cozy up inside with a piping hot bowl of soup. Send us your favorite comforting soup, and you could win \$500. Enter by August 10.





Texas Bluebonnet

CAROL BRADY
NUECES EC

It's time to pop open the bubbly and celebrate the waning days of summer. The addition of sparkling wine to this cocktail makes it feel a bit elegant, which is always a plus, but this festive drink can easily be whipped up for four or doubled for a crowd.

½ cup blue Curaçao liqueur
1½ cups lemonade
2 cups sparkling wine
Juice of 1 lemon
Orange slices, for garnish
Lemon slices, for garnish
Maraschino cherries, for garnish

1. Fill a pitcher with ice. Add blue Curaçao liqueur, lemonade, sparkling wine and lemon juice. Stir.
2. Serve over ice, garnished with fruit on skewers.

SERVES 4

TCP Vianney Rodriguez features many more cocktail recipes on sweetlifebake.com and in *Latin Twist: Traditional and Modern Cocktails*, the book she co-authored with Yvette Marquez-Sharpnack.

From Cocktail to Mocktail

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Nonalcoholic cocktails don't have to be bland. Here are a few tips and tricks to keep your party hopping:

Replace sparkling wine with soda water for a guilt-free bubbly effect.

A mix of cranberry and grape juice produces a delicious sangrialike option.

Ginger beer punches up the flavor and adds a warm kick to a mocktail.

Nonalcoholic spirits are becoming more common in stores. From vodka to mezcal and nonalcoholic beer and wine, options are hitting shelves, ready to help you shake up a mocktail.

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COURTESY CHET GARNER

A Jaw-Dropping Journey

Brazos Bend State Park has acres and acres of alligators

BY CHET GARNER

I LIKE ZOOS. The cages and fences offer comfort when staring into the eyes of an apex predator. But there’s something exhilarating about stepping into a natural habitat and encountering a wild creature in its element.

And that’s the draw of Brazos Bend State Park, which comprises nearly 5,000 acres of wetland marsh and coastal prairie in Fort Bend County. Visit on a sunny day and you’re almost guaranteed to have an encounter with its most famous residents—American alligators.

Driving into the park felt like visiting a movie set, amid oak trees dripping with Spanish moss that create a canopy over the road. It’s hard to believe that I was only 40 miles from downtown Houston. I stopped into the visitor center and asked where to find the gators. They simply pointed me toward the park’s 37 miles of trails and said, “That way.”

It turns out hundreds of alligators inhabit the park, and it’s not uncommon to see 40–50 on a good day, in addition to the park’s other reptiles, amphibians and 300-plus species of birds.

I set off on the trail surrounding 40-Acre Lake, and it wasn’t long before I came face-to-face with a living, breathing dinosaur. It was at least 7 feet long and sunning on the edge of the trail. I cautiously passed by, giving it a Texas nod on my way. Twenty feet down the trail was another and then another.

A ranger assured me that in the park’s 40 years, no one has been injured, much less killed, by an alligator. They’re fairly docile creatures and prefer flight over fight when it comes to humans. Even so, I didn’t want to tempt fate and was more than happy enjoying them all from a very safe distance. ■

ABOVE Chet keeps a safe distance from one of the hundreds of gators that roam freely.

TCP From the safety of your screen, join Chet as he wanders among the gators. Watch 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.

AUGUST

8

McKinney Thomas Craig, (214) 769-0645, thecomedyarena.com

9

Alpine [9–10] Big Bend Ranch Rodeo, (432) 294-1640, bigbendranchrodeo.com

10

Chappell Hill Wine and Cheese Stroll, (979) 337-9910, chappellhilltx.com

14

Brady [14–17] Heart of Texas Honky Tonk Festival, (325) 597-1895, heartoftexascountry.com

Corsicana [14–17] Red, (903) 872-5421, thewllac.com

17

Brenham Peter, Paul and Mary Alive; (979) 337-7240; thebarnhillcenter.com

Santo Southwest Open Chili Championship, (940) 733-6086, casichilli.net

22

Fredericksburg [22–25] Gillespie County Fair, (830) 997-2359, gillespiefair.com

23

Decatur [23–24] Wise County Guild Quilt Show, (817) 991-3407, wisecountyquiltguild.org

24

Lubbock Book Festival, (806) 775-3634, lubbockbookfest.com

Castroville [24–25]
St. Louis Day Celebration,
(830) 931-2826,
saintlouisday.com

27

**Stonewall Commemoration
of Lyndon Johnson's
Birthday,** (830) 868-7128,
nps.gov/lyjo

29

Uvalde [29–Sept. 1]
Palomino Fest & Pro Rodeo,
palominofest.com

30

Fredericksburg [30–31]
Vereins Quilt Show,
vereinsquiltguild.org

**Marfa [30–Sept. 1] Lights
Festival,** (432) 217-6777,
marfachamberofcommerce.org

Granbury [30–Sept. 2]
**Labor Day Weekend
Festival,** (682) 936-4550,
granburysquare.com

31

**Sunrise Beach Village
Sip & Stroll,** (713) 299-1728,
sunrisebeachtx.gov

SEPTEMBER

7

**Luling Luling Foundation
Youth Grill-Off,** (830) 875-
2438, lulingfoundation.org

**McKinney Jurassic Night
Out at the Heard,** (972) 562-
5566, heardmuseum.org

**New Braunfels Donny
Edwards: Tribute to the King,**
(830) 627-0808, brauntex.org

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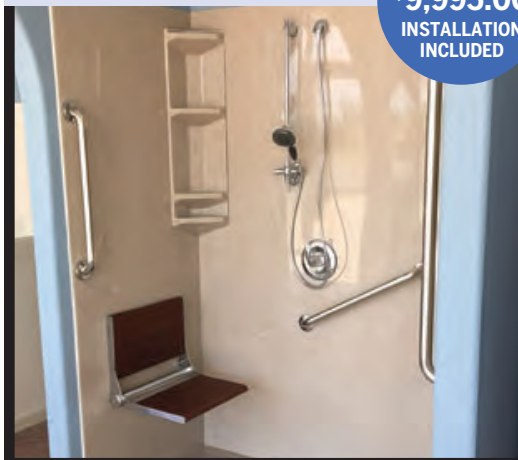


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Textures

The rough bark of a tree, the smooth surface of a pond in early morning, a display of soft bird feathers—the surfaces in our world offer a variety of visual and physical textures. From childhood we are told to look and not touch; but these offerings make us wish we could do both.

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1 KELTON CARVER
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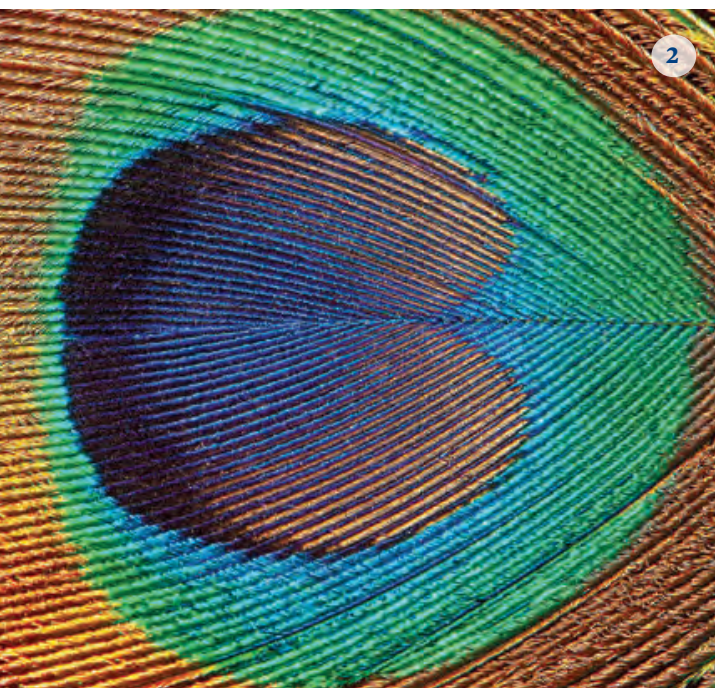
"Peacocks achieve their stunning plumage display through structural coloration called iridescence."

3 CARLY LATHAM
HEART OF TEXAS EC

"I love looking at the skin of a Texas horse apple."

4 DORA CAFFEY
TAYLOR EC

"A Rio Grande turkey shown in his finest ruffles."



Upcoming Contests

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Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

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



Friends in High Places

He was known for saving windmills, but one day he saved a whole lot more

BY SAM W. YOUNG
ILLUSTRATION BY
KEVIN HOWDESHELL

DAD CAME HOME from work one day with his left hand in a big bandage. He had driven himself to a hospital, where his fingers were repaired by a surgeon. One finger was almost severed but was put back together and ultimately saved.

When I was young, he worked for West Texas Lumber Co. in San Angelo, the local Aermotor Windmill dealer. Later he worked on his own. Ranch owners for miles around knew he was the man to call if a windmill needed repairs or replacement from the 1930s into the '80s. The cattle and sheep had to have water.

My brother and I are firmly convinced that no one man installed more windmills than our father. He was still climbing the contraptions after his 80th birthday and after he sold his business.

Working on these machines was dan-

gerous, even for a professional. Windmillers free-climbed and stood with a helper on a platform—untethered—as they made their repairs.

Aermotor windmills pivot on a vertical mast, with all the weight sitting on a washer inside a small cavity just under the motor. The motor has to be lifted a few inches to replace that washer.

To lift the windmill, with all the weight of the mill and the sucker rods, a chain is tied to the push rod and the tower and then a helper has to turn the wheel by hand and hold it.

Dad always had to have a helper, of course, and I was usually his helper in the summertime and over Christmas breaks.

There were days when we would load the pickup in San Angelo with the parts of a new windmill, the rods and pipe, sand, gravel, cement—everything needed for installation. I remember once when we drove to a new well on King Mountain, south of Odessa, assembled the tower and mill, raised it up with the pickup, dug the anchors by hand, and had it pumping water before sundown.

But I wasn't Dad's helper that fateful day south of San Angelo.

On that day, the chain must have slipped, allowing the weight of the rotor assembly to smash his fingers. He didn't say so, but what else could it have been?

There was something else he didn't mention until a few days later.

His helper had reacted to the sight of the blood and started to pass out. Dad reached out and grabbed the man with his right hand to keep him from falling off the windmill platform.

I don't know just how the issue was resolved from that point, but I do know this: While Dad's left hand was trapped, he saved a man's life that day with his right hand—the day he came home with the big bandage. ■

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— J. Fitzgerald, VA



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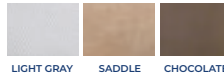
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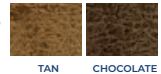
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