

TEXAS CO-OP POWER
JULY 2025

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

FAYETTE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Powering Today,
Preparing for Tomorrow.



ANNUAL MEETING

Weds., July 16, 2025
KC Community Center
190 S. Brown St., La Grange, TX 78945

Registration: 5:30 p.m.
Business Meeting: 7:00 p.m.



Official Annual Meeting Notice

When: Wednesday, July 16, 2025

What: Registration at 5:30 p.m. | Business meeting at 7 p.m.

Where: KC Community Center, La Grange

Fayette Electric Cooperative will conduct its annual meeting **Wednesday, July 16, 2025**. Directors for districts 1, 2 and 5 will be elected; reports and updates regarding the co-op's business will be presented to members; and any other business as may come before the meeting will be conducted.

VOTE

The following candidates have been nominated for these positions in accordance with Section 4.02 of Fayette EC's bylaws:

District 1

Scott Schultz

District 2

Joseph D. Kruppa

District 3

James A. Anderle

Please read the candidates' profiles on Page 21 and then cast your vote during the annual meeting. All registered Fayette Electric members can vote at the annual meeting. Directors are nominated from the district in which they reside, but they serve members in all districts. This means you don't have to live in districts 1, 2 or 5 to vote.

ATTEND

Fayette Electric's annual meeting is **Wednesday, July 16**, at the KC Community Center in La Grange.

SNACK

4-H members will serve cookies, lemonade and coffee.

LISTEN

The business meeting starts at 7 p.m. with reports from Fayette EC's general manager, the board of directors' election, and additional matters that may come before the meeting.

ASK

You'll also have the opportunity before, during and after the meeting to speak with Fayette EC's staff and board members and ask any questions you might have.

WIN!

- **\$20 energy credits** will be awarded to all registered members who attend the annual meeting (one per membership).
- Energy credits from \$50 to \$250 will be awarded throughout the meeting, along with other great door prizes donated by Fayette EC's generous vendors.

WHAT TO BRING

- The registration card on the back cover of this magazine will be collected at registration and used to draw door prize winners, who must be present to win.
- The door prize ticket, also on the back cover of this magazine, is what you will present to collect your prize if your number and name are called.

We look forward to seeing you at this year's annual meeting.

James A. Anderle
Secretary-Treasurer

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FOR JULY 4

Texas Coop Power

FOR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE MEMBERS

JULY 2025

Run of the Mill

A focus on ancient grains
makes James Brown
no ordinary miller



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2. ENERGY STAR rated units qualify for 30% through 2032,
26% through 2033 and 22% through 2034

July 2025



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The Renaissance man who pulled strings and gave new life to old grains.

By Claire Stevens
Photos by Wyatt McSpadden

A Century of the Simon

When the railroad ended in Brenham, it brought the world to its stage—which endures today.

By Addie Broyles

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James Brown, owner of Barton Springs Mill in Dripping Springs.
Photo by Wyatt McSpadden
ABOVE
The Simon Theatre in downtown Brenham.
Natalie Lacy Lange | Courtesy the Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre



Anchored in History

THE OLDEST AMERICAN port west of New Orleans celebrates its bicentennial this year.

The Congress of Mexico established the Port of Galveston on October 17, 1825.

It was home to the Texas Navy during the Republic of Texas' war for independence. Before Ellis Island in New York opened in 1892, it was one of the main gateways into the country for immigrants. At the end of the 19th century, it was the world's foremost cotton port.

But after the hurricane of 1900 destroyed Galveston, Houston emerged as the safer long-term shipping option on the Gulf. Today, Galveston is the fourth-busiest cruise port in the U.S.

Two events in Galveston will celebrate the port's 200th anniversary: a party on the pier October 17 and bicentennial gala October 18.

Special Delivery

For most of America's history, that meant a delivery via the post office using a process that originated 250 years ago this month.

The postal system was established July 26, 1775. Benjamin Franklin was the first postmaster general.

Did you know? The first U.S. stamps, featuring images of Franklin and George Washington, were issued July 1, 1847.



FINISH THIS SENTENCE

My favorite Fourth of July was ...

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 May prompt: **I blush whenever ...**

I think of some of the things I did in school!

STEVE BAILEY
PENTEX ENERGY
GAINESVILLE

My wife catches me staring at how beautiful she still is after more than 40 years of marriage.

ROGER ELSEY
PEDERNALES EC
WIMBERLEY

My phone goes off in a public place.

COLLEEN PROVASEK
SAM HOUSTON EC
LIVINGSTON

I tell the story about accidentally walking into the men's restroom at a restaurant in Houston.

CAROL HILTON
BANDERA EC
PIPE CREEK

Visit our website to see more responses.

TCP Contests and More

ENTER CONTESTS AT
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Holiday Breakfast

FOCUS ON TEXAS PHOTOS
Abstract

RECOMMENDED READING

In December 2016 we told of Galveston's history as the "Ellis Island of Texas." Read the story at TexasCoopPower.com.

MAY 2025 Bavaria, By Way of Texas

"I met Ronny Tippelt in 1984. In '85 and '86 he played my backyard. He was and still is the best yodeler in Texas."

DENNIS PEAK
PEDERNALES EC
LAMPASAS



ERICH SCHLEGEL

Destination: Walburg

We often visit Walburg for German food, drinks and, of course, the oompah music [*Bavaria, By Way of Texas*; May 2025]. From now on I imagine our trips must include reservations made well in advance as many of our fellow Texans will be venturing there to enjoy a bit of Germany come to Texas.

Martha Everman Jones
Victoria EC
Victoria

Hail Chaser

My father, Bob Rinker, was a hail chaser for the Colorado State University meteorology department in "hail alley" in the early 1960s [*Twisted Approach*, May 2025]. Hail alley starts at the eastern front of the Rockies in Colorado and Wyoming and covers all territory east to the Great Lakes.

One time he chased a hailstorm from the Colorado-Nebraska border



JENNY BROWN

all the way to Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Susan Frensley
Wise EC
Richardson

Beeline for Sea Center

I recently retired and didn't even know that Sea Center Texas existed, so my wife and I made a beeline for Lake Jackson [*Fish School*, April 2025]. What a great visit that was at the hatchery with the guide who had done it for many, many years.

Chris Gloger
Pedernales EC
Canyon Lake

Pilot Connection

In 1980 I worked in Yugoslavia for six weeks with Dennis Dalrymple, the son of Millie Dalrymple [*The WASPs Who Flew Out of Sweetwater*, April 2025]. We traveled to the mountain town of Danilovgrad, where America-friendly locals had sheltered his father after bailing out of his damaged bomber.

A couple of great pilot stories in that family.

Russell Honerkamp
Bluebonnet EC
Brenham

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

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TEXAS CO-OP POWER Volume 82, Number 1 (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 \$5.11 per year for individual members of subscribing cooperatives and is paid from equity accruing to the member. If you are not a member of a subscribing cooperative, you can purchase an annual subscription at the nonmember rate of \$7.50.

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Living the GOOD LOAF

BY CLAIRE STEVENS • PHOTOS BY WYATT MCSPADDEN

The Renaissance man who pulled strings and gave new life to old grains

James Brown has a fascination with history. For 23 years, the Texas native played the viola da gamba, a bowed instrument that resembles a cello but fell out of favor nearly 300 years ago.

“The whole thing was to put the listener in a time and a place,” Brown says. “When you’re hearing this music, if you closed your eyes, it’d be the same as being in Germany in 1735 hearing Bach conducting the chapel choir and orchestra on the same instruments.”

Brown specialized in music of that era, performed and conducted around the country, and was director of worship and arts for a church. But in 2016, he was looking into a second career.

Brown had been baking bread and pizza as a hobby (though he does have a culinary degree picked up among various music degrees). In pursuit of a better loaf, he happened upon a blogger in New Mexico who was touting the wonders of baking with locally grown grains from a co-op in Albuquerque.

To his surprise, he couldn’t find a similar operation in Texas.

So Brown, who was living in Austin at the time, looked into establishing a small-scale mill that could process grains from local farmers. And, just as in his music career, he turned to the wisdom of the past, bringing those around him on a journey through time—this time by way of wheat.

Armed with historical documents detailing the grain varieties grown in Texas in the early 20th century and some hazy information about mills powered by Austin’s Barton Springs in the 19th century, Brown set out “to take people to a time and place” that no longer exists.

“What was growing in Texas? What were people eating? What was being milled in your hometown?” he wondered.

Brown got to work in 2017, and eight years in, Barton Springs Mill in Dripping Springs, about 20 miles west of Austin, provides freshly milled grains to a growing audience of restaurants, distilleries, bakeries and home bakers. It’s showing folks why they should care whether their flour is local and organic or an ancient, heritage or landrace variety.



CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE
Wheat sheaves from
several heirloom varieties.
James Brown in front of
one of his three mills,
each fitted with a pair of
2,500-pound stones.
Freshly milled grains are
available for purchase
on-site and online.





The grains are selected with a focus on ancient varieties—those largely unchanged over time and still closely resembling how they looked and tasted before human intervention—and landrace and heritage grains—those developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, before more intensive hybridizing. Landrace grains are specifically adapted over time to the local climate where they are developed.

In addition to churning out flour, BSM offers tours of its 17,000-square-foot facility, which houses all the equipment to store, clean, mill and ship grains.

In a classroom opposite the mills, staff and guest instructors teach visitors to make breads, pastas and other baked goods. Through large windows in the classroom, visitors can watch the three stone mills.

The 7-foot-tall pine structures are fitted with a pair of 2,500-pound, flat composite stones. A pattern etched into the stones crushes the grain. The miller can control the result by adjusting the stones' closeness, the speed at which grain is added and the speed at which the upper stone rotates. Power would have been provided by the water of a nearby creek a century ago, but today the mills get their energy from Pedernales Electric Cooperative.

The rumbling stone mills look like relics of the past. In some ways, they are. These days, most commercial milling is done with roller mills, which can produce flour much quicker.

Brown's goal is to show that flour can have its own incredible flavor and aroma. He wants the loaves of bread to transport them back in time, much like his music. Stone-milling preserves the germ and the bran, flavorful parts of the wheat kernel that are typically removed when milling white flour (though included in whole wheat).

"You pick up the aroma and the flavor and the characters of these wheats, and they become an equal player in anything that you make," he says. "It becomes an ingredient that contributes those things, rather than just being neutral."

TAM 105, a variety of hard, red wheat developed by Texas A&M University in 1976 and one of the mill's more modern grains, smells to Brown like a wet dog while it's being milled. Fortunately, that doesn't translate when the finished flour is used for baking, and Brown recommends it for breads, pastas and pizza dough.

On the other hand, rouge de Bordeaux, a 19th-century wheat, naturally smells and tastes of cinnamon, baking spices and molasses. "People will swear that's in the bread," Brown says. "No, that's just the wheat—wheat, yeast, water and salt."

Brown has gone to great lengths to track down seeds for wheat varieties he desires. He found farmers still growing marquis, which was popular in the U.S. in the beginning of the 20th century, in the Canadian province of Saskatchewan. Other seeds he could get only from the Department of Agriculture's National Plant Germplasm System, a bank of plant material that conserves plant genetics.

When BSM was just an idea, Brown convinced 10 organic farmers across the state to meet with him. Over coffee or a meal, he presented his pitch: He'd provide the seeds and buy the wheat they produced. To his surprise, all 10 were



RIGHT Brown shows unmilled Sonora soft white wheat kernels.

OPPOSITE Barton Springs Mill's warehouse. To keep the grain fresh in the Texas heat, oxygen is removed from each bag of wheat. Last year, the mill processed 650 tons of grain.



interested, which meant he had to turn some down due to a lack of capacity.

Henry Martens has been growing wheat for Brown, in rotation with peanuts and cotton, at his farm in Tokio, about 40 miles southwest of Lubbock, since 2017.

A fifth-generation farmer, Martens always knew he wanted to farm. In 2015, when a piece of land became available that hadn't yet been treated with chemicals, he couldn't pass it up. He began organic peanut farming, which he rotated with cotton.

Today, Martens farms roughly 2,000 acres but likens his experience farming organic to tending a garden. The work is especially labor intensive—keeping up with weeds and caring for crops without the use of chemicals—but he says organic farming is worth it for him.

"It takes dedication and love," he says.

When he met Brown, Martens had been looking to add another crop to his rotation. Crop rotation is particularly important for organic farmers, who rely on it to manage pests and diseases and keep soil healthy. Peanuts reintroduce nitrogen, a key nutrient, into the soil. Plant only cotton too many years in a row, and pests become a problem.

Starring Rolls

A Michelin star is considered by many to be the highest award a restaurant can receive. The Michelin Guide has been bestowing stars since 1926, but it took until 2024 for the guide's secret reviewers to finally make it to Texas.

In November, 15 Texas restaurants were awarded Michelin stars, including awards for barbecue, sushi, and Mexican and Southern fares. Among the stars, five of the awarded restaurants use grain from Barton Springs Mill.

Wheat is a good rotation crop for Martens because it can be planted in winter, when weeds are less of a concern, and the tall grass provides cover to the ground, protecting it from high winds. As another plus, Brown pays his farmers significantly more for their crops than the market rate.

An additional benefit for Martens is getting to try the flour from his wheat.

"When you see it, it's not what you're used to seeing—the flour, where it's so fine and perfect and white," Martens says. "But I guess that's never mattered to me and my wife. We care about it being organic and it being directly from the farm that we know, and it tastes amazing."

The best way to test a grain's flavor, Brown says, is to make a pancake with it. They're simple, quick and allow the flavor of the grain to come through.

And since "nobody wants to eat a spoonful of flour," Brown sends visitors next door to Abby Jane Bakeshop, which sells a variety of baked goods that use only BSM grains.

Brown is proud to help farmers, supporting what he calls the local grain economy. He works with four to five farmers each year (groups rotate in and out with their crops). Most are in Texas, but he has also worked with farmers in Oklahoma, Colorado and Arizona.

Brown says he gets a call from a farmer wanting to grow for him about once a week, but he's at capacity. Last year, the mill processed 650 tons of grain. This year, it may take in a record 800 tons.

"I got into all this because I wanted a better loaf of bread," Brown says. "That's really the long and short of it."

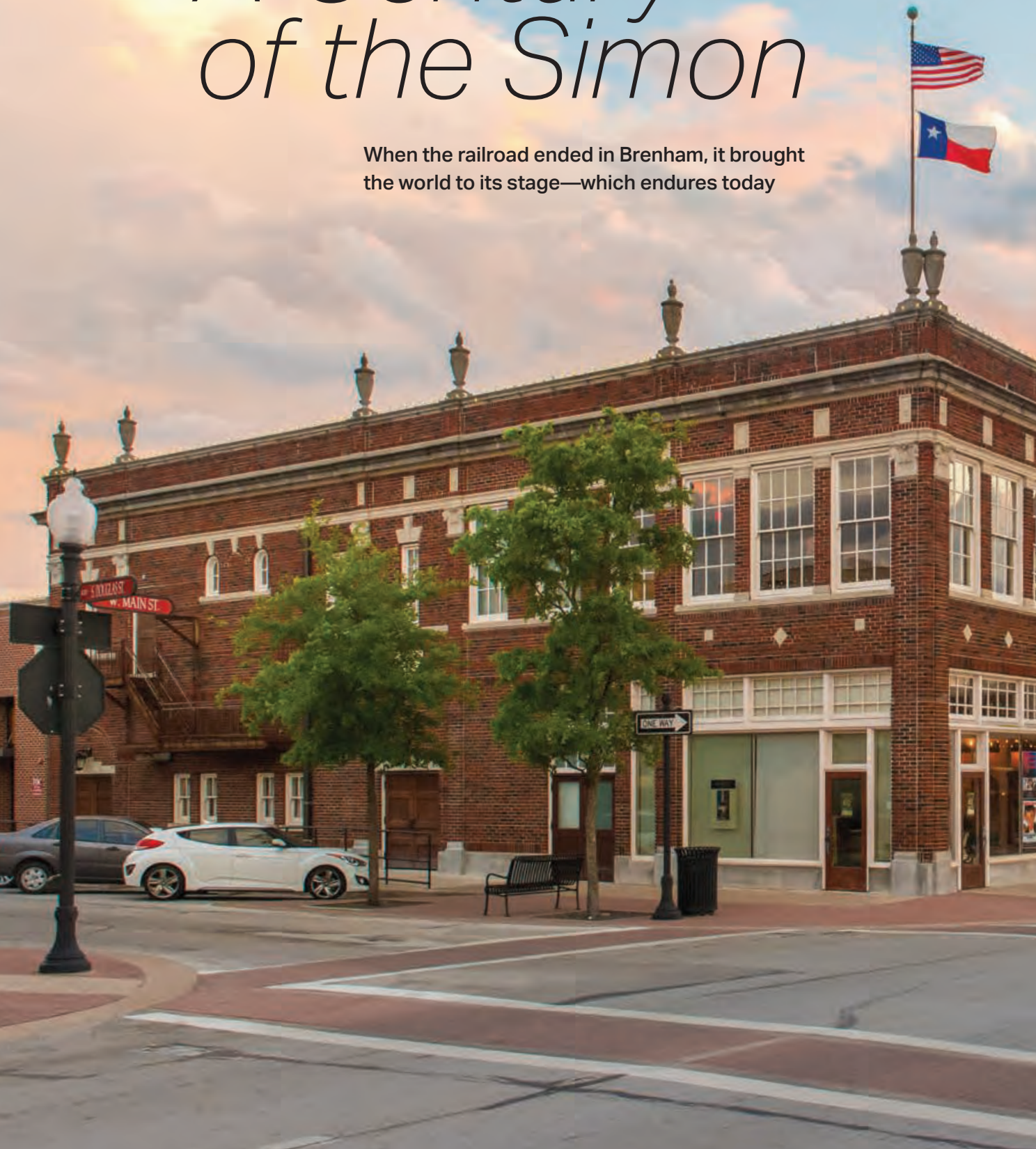
"But along the way, I became more intimately acquainted with what's going on with American farms and with American farmers and became quite passionate about how we treat farmers, regard farmers and our farmland." ■

TCP Watch the video on our website to tour Barton Springs Mill.



A Century of the Simon

When the railroad ended in Brenham, it brought
the world to its stage—which endures today





NATALIE LACY LANGE | COURTESY THE BARNHILL CENTER AT HISTORIC SIMON THEATRE

BY ADDIE BROYLES



The man whose name is on Brenham’s famed Simon Theatre never saw it completed, but the renovated theater still reflects his vision a century later.

The historic venue on Main Street in Brenham, midway between Austin and Houston, turns 100 this year. It’s thriving today because of a multimillion-dollar restoration that saved it from the brink of crumbling, and its story tells the story of Brenham, a town that has found a way to mine its past to preserve its future.



In the 1920s, the theater, originally with more than 700 seats and a balcony and separate entry for Black theatergoers, emerged from the imagination of James H. Simon, son of a Polish immigrant, who grew up in Brenham in the entertainment industry and died three months before the first performers took the stage.

Simon was a boy when his family moved to Brenham, arriving with some of the first Jewish settlers in the region and staying because that’s where the railroad ended, according to Sharon Brass, a local researcher who created the *A Century of Simon* exhibit, on display at the historic theater earlier this year.

The Simon family arrived in the mid-1860s, and James’ father, Alex Simon, opened a mercantile store. He eventually bought the Grand Opera House in town and turned it into a family-friendly venue for musical performances, receptions, recitals, political meetings and vaudeville, which was quickly becoming the most popular form of entertainment at the time.

The Simon Theatre stands as an anchor in downtown Brenham, though in the late 20th century, it came close to being demolished to make way for a parking lot.



As the terminus of the Washington County Rail Road, constructed in 1860, the county seat's population doubled every decade until 1900—and with it grew Brenham's reputation as an entertainment hub, along with the opera house.

When Alex Simon died in 1906, his sons took over. They opened the stage for an even wider variety of local performers, including Black singers from the nearby Brenham Normal and Industrial College, a postsecondary school for African Americans, according to Tina Henderson, who grew up in Brenham. She's president of the Texas Ten Historical Explorers, a research organization focused on the freedmen's communities around Washington County.

James H. Simon sold the opera house in 1918 and started making plans to build his own theater. He teamed up with Houston architect Alfred C. Finn to make plans for a majestic performance space with an upstairs section for Black theatergoers so they could watch the shows too.

"They built the theater with [integration] in mind," Henderson says. Although Simon didn't live to see the completion of his theater, he was ahead of his time in terms of wanting to make art available to more people, Henderson says.

"Segregation was very harsh, but there were some people

who understood it was unkind," she says. "They had to abide by the laws, but I think they were trying to accommodate and do what they could" to make the performances accessible to all.

Variety acts had been around for a long time, but it wasn't until the late 1800s that "vaudeville," a word borrowed from French, became a household term to describe a kind of show performed by artists, comedians, magicians—anyone who had something amazing, interesting or entertaining to show off.

At the height of vaudeville, as many as 50,000 performers traveled in troupes to perform in thousands of American cities, including Brenham. This lasted from the end of the Civil War into the 1930s, when in-person variety shows gave way to those broadcast on radios and, later, television.

The earliest vaudeville shows took place in saloons and beer halls, but their popularity soared, thanks in part to the growing popularity of circuses during this time. Venues like the Grand Opera House in Brenham opened in places served by the railroad to make it easy for the performers to get there and for visitors to come to the shows, according to Brass.

Many of the vaudeville performers who came through



COURTESY THE BARNHILL CENTER AT HISTORIC SIMON THEATRE



CLOCKWISE FROM OPPOSITE The 1954 Western film *Arrow in the Dust* drew a crowd to the Simon. The theater's stage and auditorium during its extensive reconstruction. The Malpass Brothers brought their traditional country and bluegrass music to the Simon in September 2024.

Brenham would have been well-known to people who lived there, thanks to telegraphs and the newspapers that came in on the railroads daily from the East Coast.

Vaudeville shows were on the decline in the 1920s due to the rising popularity of silent films, but they were a crucial part of the early days of the Simon Theatre because the shows brought in big names, like Adelaide Prince, who was born in London but grew up near Brenham.

After Simon's death in 1925, the theater was sold to the Stuckert family, who ran it for almost 50 years before selling it. The venue continued to host movies and events into the 1980s, when competition from drive-in theaters, shopping malls and home video ultimately caused the theater to shutter. After a showing of *Night of the Living Dead* on October 31, 1985, the theater went dark.

Jennifer H. Eckermann, former tourism and marketing director for the city, is a Brenham native who remembers when all those historic buildings were an afterthought.

"The Simon wasn't in great shape," she recalls. "There was a lot of talk about it being demolished to build a parking lot. For so many downtowns, that was the answer."

In 1999, after a career at Blue Bell Creameries, Eckermann started working with the nonprofit Main Street Brenham.

From Downtown to Camptown

The Texas Ten Historical Explorers tells the stories of the freedmen's communities that formed after the Civil War, when as much as half of Washington County was Black. Many of those families lived in freedmen's communities spread throughout the region, and one of the oldest, called Camptown, has a seven-part immersive audio tour, available online. It starts at Brenham's Jerry Wilson Park and explores the story of a consequential fire in 1866 and the evolution of the neighborhood as a center for Black life.

By that time, the Simon Theatre had become a Chinese restaurant and then sat vacant, waiting for demolition or the kind of restoration that takes a miracle to pull off.

She joined a handful of people who had a vision for what the brick building could be. Thanks to that community spirit that led James H. Simon to build the theater so many years ago, local boosters raised more than \$1 million for the restoration project. The Simon Theatre reopened in 2004 with 321 seats.

The group eventually raised another \$1 million to renovate the ballroom and retail space that was part of the original design. The facility now operates as the Barnhill Center at Historic Simon Theatre, with shows throughout the year from performers such as Grammy Award-winners Ricky Skaggs and Marty Stuart to tribute bands celebrating the Carpenters, the Eagles and the Andrews Sisters.

Eckermann says the project sparked a downtown revival that continues to this day and that the success story of the renovation reflects changing attitudes toward preservation.

"People are always coming and going," she says. "You might own this building now, but one day, you won't." The current keepers of the keys—and the stories—are trying to tell new stories while also keeping the old ones alive.

The Simon Theatre could last another century, but Eckermann says that depends on always finding new ways to bring in people. They've had success in recent years with themed movie nights and school performances.

"You have to be thinking about the next generation and what would be appealing about this theater to them," she says. "What can it continue to offer to the community?"

For its 100th year, the Simon Theatre team kicked off the celebration with performances that included juggling, dancing and comedy. "It was fun to have something for everybody," Eckermann says. "It's still vaudeville." ■




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- ✓ Free smartphone app

Alarming fact: More than 48 million Americans hear so poorly that their quality of life significantly suffers as a result.

The problem: Most wait too long to act, hoping their hearing will improve on its own. Sadly, it never does. But now, a game-changing device is making waves across the industry, and experts say **it's the biggest breakthrough they've seen in over a decade.**

It's the new Horizon IX hearing aid.

Horizon IX is currently the best-selling device at renowned U.S. company, hear.com, developed by top audio engineers from Signia. Their goal was to combine the best possible speech clarity with a comfortable, invisible design using cutting-edge German technology.

“We knew we were onto something when our engineers came to us with this device. **It outperformed every other hearing aid, in every single test we ran, sometimes by 2x.**” says hear.com co-founder Dr. Marco Vietor. “It’s a hearing aid people actually want to wear.”



What makes them so special?

It's one of the world's first hearing aids with dual processing. This is special because it's the first time engineers have been able to pack not one, but two state-of-the-art computer chips into a device this small. And with double the power comes double the clarity.

This means they offer all of the usual benefits of modern hearing aids with the added bonus of something completely new: they can process speech and background noise independently, then combine them for unparalleled, crystal clear sound.

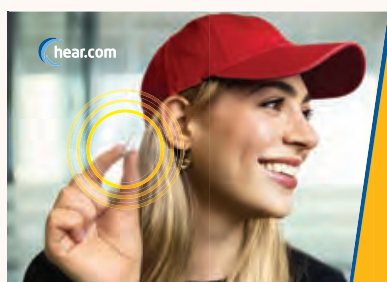
“It's the first time I've seen patients genuinely speechless. They go from struggling to hear to 'wow' in seconds.”

-Dr. Emily Russell, Lead Audiologist

Where can I get Horizon IX?

So far, hear.com has helped more than 540,000 Americans enjoy life with better hearing, thanks to Horizon IX. **Now, it's your turn!**

Check if you qualify for a **45-day no-risk trial today**, and have a brand new pair of Horizon IX hearing aids on your doorstep in as little as 48 hours.



Scan the QR code or visit **hear.com/tcp** to check if you qualify for a 45-day no-risk trial.

START HERE!





Powering Today, Preparing for Tomorrow.



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER

**DOUG
LAMBERT**

AS WE REVIEW another eventful year at Fayette Electric Cooperative, I'm pleased to take this opportunity to reflect on the progress we've made and share the direction we're headed.

The theme of this year's report—**Powering Today, Preparing for Tomorrow**—is more than just a slogan. It embodies our unwavering commitment to meeting your needs today while laying a strong foundation for the generations to come.

We exist to serve you—our members, our neighbors and our communities. Every investment we make, every decision we take, is guided by that mission.

Building for a Stronger Future

One of the most visible changes over the past year has been our move into our new headquarters, a facility specifically designed to meet the evolving needs of our growing cooperative.

Our former offices in La Grange served us faithfully for decades, but after more than 60 years, the building could no longer accommodate the demands of a modern electric utility. Outdated infrastructure, limited space and insufficient technology capabilities made it increasingly difficult to provide the level of service excellence you deserve.

This new facility is more than just bricks and mortar—it's a cornerstone of our future. It allows us to streamline operations, improve communication, and respond more quickly and effectively to service disruptions.

We've installed a 24/7 system operations center to

monitor outages in real time and coordinate immediate responses. This is a significant step forward in our mission to provide safe and reliable electricity to all our members, day and night.

Through the SmartHub app and our online outage map, you can now track power outages, receive real-time updates and report issues more conveniently than ever before. This added transparency and accessibility are part of our continued focus on putting our members first and empowering you with the information you need.

Strategic Partnerships, Smarter Service

Another major development this year was our partnership with Guadalupe Valley Electric Cooperative, a neighboring co-op with a strong track record in system operations.

Under a new shared services agreement, GVEC now manages Fayette EC's after-hours, week-end and holiday operations. This strategic move improves our ability to respond to outages around the clock and ensures continuity of service when our members need it most.

By working together, we're upholding one of the core principles of the co-op model—Cooperation Among Cooperatives. This partnership strengthens our operational capabilities, provides cost efficiencies and reinforces our shared commitment to serving local communities with integrity and reliability.

Preparing for the Unexpected

Electric service is subject to many external factors—

especially weather events, high winds and storms. While we can't prevent every outage, we are taking proactive measures to reduce the risk and enhance our system's resilience. A key part of this effort is our expanded vegetation management program, which helps us maintain clear rights-of-way and reduce outage risks from overgrown trees and brush.

In light of the growing threat of wildfires, we've also begun implementing a more comprehensive wildfire mitigation plan. This includes enhanced tree trimming, hazardous tree removal and a greater focus on clearing vegetation around critical infrastructure. These measures are not only vital for reliability but are also essential to protecting the communities we serve.

Keeping Our Crews—and You—Safe

Safety remains a top priority at Fayette EC. It's a value we live by every day. Whether restoring power during a storm or conducting routine maintenance, our employees work in demanding conditions that require skill, training and vigilance.

That's why I'm extremely proud to announce that FEC achieved five consecutive years without a lost-time accident in 2024. This is an extraordinary milestone that speaks volumes about the professionalism, dedication and teamwork of our entire staff.

We also recognize that to maintain this level of excellence, we need to equip our crews with reliable, safe vehicles and equipment. Our fleet—made up of bucket trucks, diggers and service trucks—is essential to the work we do. Like any high-use machinery, these vehicles experience wear and tear.

This year, we began a gradual but strategic fleet replacement program to ensure our team has the tools it needs to do its job safely and efficiently.

Securing the Grid

In a world where cyber threats continue to evolve, securing our electrical infrastructure is just as important as maintaining it.

That's why we applied for and were awarded a \$241,000 cybersecurity grant from the U.S. Department of Energy. With this funding, we implemented advanced monitoring software to detect and respond to cyber threats in real time and received training from experts in operational technology security.

These improvements help protect your power supply and ensure that the systems we depend on are secure, modern and resilient.

Our Financial Snapshot

The past year was one of substantial growth and investment. FEC's total utility plant in service reached \$133.5 million in 2024, an increase of \$21.3 million over the previous year. Our operating revenues rose to \$39.1 million, thanks in part to a growth in industrial load, including a new data center in the Warda area.

At the same time, operating expenses increased \$2.1 million to a total of \$37.6 million, driven by inflation, growth-related investments and essential maintenance activities such as pole inspections and equipment upgrades. Despite our best efforts, we ended the year with a \$1.5 million financial shortfall, resulting in a negative margin of 3.6%.



To address this, the board approved a necessary rate adjustment of 4.3%, effective in the new fiscal year. While we never take rate increases lightly, this adjustment is part of a gradual and measured approach to ensure our financial health. For the average residential member, this will result in a monthly increase of approximately \$4.08 per 1,000 kilowatt-hours—a modest amount that ensures the delivery of reliable service.

Even with the rate change, FEC remains one of the most cost-effective electric providers in our region. Compared to neighboring investor-owned utilities, our members still enjoy significantly better value and lower rates.

A detailed financial report can be found on the next page of this report.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the future, we remain committed to innovation, efficiency and service. The decisions we've made this year—from facility upgrades and technology improvements to strategic partnerships and system investments—have all been with you in mind.

"Powering Today, Preparing for Tomorrow" means more than simply keeping the lights on. It means investing in infrastructure that can stand the test of time. It means building systems that respond to modern challenges—climate, cybersecurity, financial sustainability—in a way that reflects our cooperative values.

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to our employees for their exceptional work, to our board of directors for their leadership and most of all, to you, our members, for your trust, patience and ongoing support.

We are proud to serve you. And we look forward to continuing this journey—together. ■

Financial Statements

Condensed Balance Sheet

	DECEMBER 31,	
	2024	2023
ASSETS—What We Own		
Net utility	\$ 104,715,040	\$ 93,973,343
Investments	3,984,939	3,825,822
Cash	1,213,448	309,167
Temporary Cash Investments		
Notes and Accounts Receivable	3,918,555	3,885,945
Materials and Supplies	2,688,319	3,201,327
Other Current and Accrued Assets	1,584,589	2,666,127
Deferred Charges	<u>120,771</u>	<u>296,858</u>
Total Assets	\$ <u>118,225,661</u>	\$ <u>108,158,589</u>
LIABILITIES—What We Owe		
Short-Term Debt	\$ 1,850,000	\$ 1,850,000
Long-Term Debt	68,236,572	53,835,582
Accounts Payable	3,363,631	5,402,659
Other Current and Accrued Liabilities	1,403,337	1,451,126
Deferred Credits	<u>5,243,712</u>	<u>5,603,285</u>
Total Liabilities	\$ <u>150,382,635</u>	\$ <u>68,042,652</u>
EQUITY		
Memberships	\$ 255,855	\$ 247,090
Patronage Capital and Margins	<u>36,269,666</u>	<u>36,948,752</u>
Total Equity	\$ <u>35,181,694</u>	\$ <u>37,195,842</u>
Total Liabilities and Equity	\$ <u>118,225,661</u>	\$ <u>108,158,589</u>

Income Statement

	DECEMBER 31,	
	2024	2023
REVENUES		
Electric Energy Sold	\$ 39,116,444	\$ 38,432,709
Total Electric Revenue	\$ <u>39,116,444</u>	\$ <u>38,432,709</u>
EXPENSES		
Electric Power Cost	\$ 23,643,683	\$ 23,417,200
Operating Expenses and Taxes	10,398,850	8,727,254
Estimated System Depreciation	3,646,177	3,377,889
Interest on Long-Term Debt	3,573,629	2,539,517
Total Expenses	\$ <u>41,262,339</u>	\$ <u>38,061,860</u>
OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	\$ (2,145,895)	\$ 370,849
Capital Credits	482,837	722,441
Nonoperating Income	\$ 120,286	\$ 57,558
Net Margins	\$ <u>(1,542,772)</u>	\$ <u>1,150,848</u>

Fayette Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



CONTACT US

2111 N. Von Minden Rd.

P.O. Box 490

La Grange, TX 78945

Local (979) 968-3181

Toll-Free 1-866-968-3181

Email electric@fayette.coop

Web fayette.coop

Your Board of Directors

Joseph D. Kruppa, President

Gale Lincke, Vice President

James A. Anderle, Secretary-Treasurer

David Lehmann

David A. Stancik

Leo C. Henke

Clayton Wessels

Your General Manager

Doug Lambert

24/7

**Outage
Hotline
Numbers**

For information and
to report outages,
please contact us.

LOCAL

(979) 968-3181

TOLL-FREE

1-866-968-3181

ABOUT FAYETTE EC

FEC serves Austin, Bastrop, Colorado, Fayette, Lavaca, Lee and Washington counties.

CONVENIENT PAYMENT OPTIONS

- Pay by Bank Draft
- Pay Online Using SmartHub
- Pay by Phone at 844-971-1048
- Pay in Person
- Pay by Credit Card Draft
- Pay by Mail

TEXAS CO-OP POWER

Fayette EC provides *Texas Co-op Power* and *TexasCoopPower.com* to give you information about events, safety, special programs and other activities of your cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the co-op office.

VISIT US ONLINE

fayette.coop



LUCK OF THE DRAW SCHOLARSHIP

High school students who applied but were not chosen to receive an FEC scholarship in May have the opportunity to win a \$1,500 Luck of the Draw scholarship at our annual meeting.

The student must be present to win and meet eligibility requirements.

Only one lucky name will be drawn.



2025 Youth Tour Winners

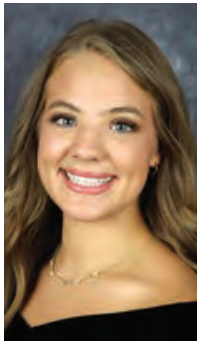


Sophia Nance and Avery Nelius were selected as the 2025 Government-in-Action Youth Tour contest winners who represented Fayette Electric Cooperative in Washington, D.C., June 15–22. Congratulating them are FEC General Manager/CEO Doug Lambert, left, and FEC Board President Joseph Kruppa.

2025 Scholarship Winners



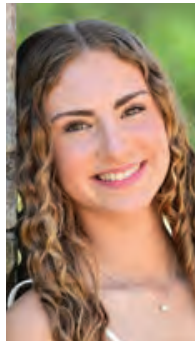
Adin Beyer
Schulenburg
High School
Son of Michelle
and Neal Beyer.
He plans to attend
Texas State Tech-
nical College and
study instrumen-
tation technology.



Brianna Clark
Sacred Heart
Catholic School
Daughter of
Shanna and John
Paul Clark.
She plans to
attend Texas
A&M University
and major in
architecture.



Jodie Kaspar
La Grange
High School
Daughter of
Dorothy Kaspar
and the late
Richard Kaspar.
She plans to
attend Texas
A&M University
and major in
landscape
architecture.



Sadie Noska
Flatonia
High School
Daughter of Jill
and Brian Noska.
She plans to
attend Texas A&M
University and
major in business
administration.



Hunter Sabo
La Grange
High School
Son of Lisa
and Frank
Moellenberndt.
He plans to attend
Texas A&M Univer-
sity and major in
civil engineering.



Adam Thompson
Schulenburg
High School
Son of Angela and
Daniel Thompson.
He plans to attend
Texas State Tech-
nical College and
study instrumen-
tation technology.

FEC Board of Directors



Joseph D. Kruppa
Board President



Gale Lincke
Board Vice President



James A. Anderle
Secretary-Treasurer



David Lehmann
Director, District 1



David A. Stancik
Director, District 7



Leo C. Henke
Director, District 4



Clayton Wessels
Director, District 6

On May 14, Clayton Wessels was appointed by the board of directors to fill the District 6 position following the passing of Director Bill Briscoe on February 13.

Member Satisfaction Survey




We Want to Hear from You!

Your opinion matters! Fayette Electric Cooperative is conducting a **Member Satisfaction Survey** to better serve you and plan for the future.

Due to an overwhelming response, the link in the original email you may have received on June 2 is no longer valid.

But we do want to hear from you and you can still share your feedback. Please visit <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Fayette> and let us know how we are doing.

Thank you for your time and interest! If you would like a survey link sent to you, please request one by emailing us at electric@fayette.coop.

 **All responses are anonymous and must be submitted online.**

Thank you for helping us power a better tomorrow!



David Lehmann To Retire After 45 Years of Service to Fayette EC



When he wasn't serving in the boardroom, David Lehmann was often found in the fields with his corn crops or tending to cattle on his farm.

AFTER 45 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE, director David Lehmann, District 1, will be retiring at this year's annual meeting.

Lehmann's legacy with Fayette Electric Cooperative began with the co-op's very inception. His grandfather L.A. Giese was a charter member of the board and served for 43 years. When Giese decided to step down, he asked Lehmann if he was interested in replacing him.

"Growing up, my dad and he were business partners who farmed and ranched together," Lehmann said. "I vividly remember when my grandfather had to attend national meetings, and we were left at home to help. At that time, I thought my dad wouldn't want me to join the board because I was just starting my farming and ranching partnership with him.

"However, some board members I knew got my ear one night and encouraged me to consider joining. They suggested it would be a good fit for me, and I just needed to find a way to make it work because it's an important role.

"Once I got on the board, things started to fall into place, and the industry kept building year after year with new technology, and now here we are 45 years later, and I am still learning more and more."

Throughout his decades of service, Lehmann became a respected and influential figure on the board. He served as vice president from 1987 to 1998, a period marked by important financial milestones.

"One of my biggest accomplishments was around 1996: we bought our Rural Utilities Service at a discount, and by doing that, we downsized our loan portfolio and saved interest expense. Being vice president at the time, I had to sign all those documents," Lehmann recalled.

In 1998, he was appointed president of the board, stepping into a role that brought more responsibility and greater learning opportunities.

"That was when [Texas Electric Cooperatives] and [the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association] really took off and provided more training," Lehmann said. "I had to attend more meetings and out-of-town events to get better versed in things because it was around the time when the utility industry really started to change with computers and more advanced technology. We had to get the cooperative in tune with what was going on in the industry."

Supporting Lehmann every step of the way has been his devoted wife, Linda. "She has been an instrumental part of my 45 years on the board," he said. "Linda has always been there to encourage me, and of course, behind the scenes, she would help me plan my trips and stay organized. I couldn't have done it without her."

Lehmann's commitment to the cooperative did not go unnoticed, as members continued to reelect him.

"I really enjoyed it," he said. "People put their trust in you, and you have to do your best over the years, because if it hadn't been for the members, I probably couldn't have done it. It still makes me proud when I meet someone who has been a member of the co-op for a long time. They make me feel good and proud to have been on the board and part of the co-op. And I am truly going to miss that."

Even as he steps away from his official duties, Lehmann's concern for the co-op's future remains strong. "From day one, I will, of course, make sure the new director who is replacing me will continue to take care of the members and District 1, because you are there to take care of their interests," he said. "My grandpa taught me that from the very beginning—the cooperative is your friend; they have your best interest at heart."

Along with the cooperative's members, Lehmann will also miss the close relationships he has built with the employees.

"Our employees are a big part of the co-op, and over the years, I have always been impressed by the quality of people who were hired," he said. "I was always treated with the utmost respect. If it weren't for the employees, we wouldn't have a very good co-op."

Looking ahead, Lehmann and Linda plan to travel more, focus on their health, enjoy ranch life and spend quality time with their two grandchildren.

Fayette EC is grateful for his legacy at the cooperative.

"For 45 remarkable years, Mr. David Lehmann has been a steadfast pillar of Fayette Electric Cooperative, guiding it through decades of change, growth and progress," said Doug Lambert, general manager. "His unwavering dedication and leadership have helped navigate the evolving landscape of the electric cooperative industry in Texas and across the nation.

"Through times of innovation and challenge alike, Mr. Lehmann has remained committed to the values of service, reliability and community. Because of his vision and care, our cooperative is stronger, our members better served and our future brighter.

"We are deeply grateful for the legacy he leaves and the countless ways he has shaped the success of Fayette Electric Cooperative." ■

Districts 1, 2 and 5 Director and Nominee Profiles

IN CONNECTION WITH the election of three directors scheduled for this meeting, the following members have been nominated at district meetings held in accordance with the bylaws.



David Lehmann
Retiring Director
DISTRICT 1

After 45 years of dedicated service, David Lehmann will retire July 16 during Fayette Electric Cooperative's annual membership meeting. A lifelong resident of Warda, Lehmann was elected to the board in 1980, continuing a family legacy that began with his grandfather L.A. Giese, a

founding board member.

Lehmann served as vice president from 1987 to 1998 and then as president from 1998 to 2024, guiding the cooperative through decades of growth and technological advancement. In 2008, he earned his Credentialed Cooperative Director certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, underscoring his commitment to strong, informed leadership.

Throughout his tenure, Lehmann was known for his steady guidance, financial stewardship and deep dedication to the co-op's members and mission.



Joseph D. Kruppa
(Incumbent)
Board President
DISTRICT 2

Joseph Kruppa was elected to the board in 2001. He served as vice president from 2006 until 2024, when he was elected president of the board. A graduate of Bishop Forest High School, Joseph proudly served in the U.S. Navy Submarine Force

during the Vietnam War.

Currently a rancher, Kruppa also brings prior experience from the power generation and oil and gas industries. He is a dedicated member of his community, actively participating in organizations such as the La Grange Noon Lions Club, where he previously served as treasurer, and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 5254, where he serves as quartermaster. Kruppa is also a third- and fourth-degree member of the Knights of Columbus.

He holds multiple certifications from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, including the Credentialed

Cooperative Director certificate (2003), the Board Leadership Certificate (2005) and the Director Gold Certificate (2019), reflecting his long-standing commitment to cooperative governance and leadership.



Scott Schultz
Director Nominee
DISTRICT 1

Scott Schultz is a real estate broker with Schultz Texas Properties and brings over three decades of experience in the electric utility and energy industry. His career spans roles with leading companies including Texas Power & Light, TU Electric, TXU Electric & Gas, TXU Energy, Constellation

Energy and Luminant Energy, where he held positions such as system engineer, project manager, consulting engineer, key account manager and energy marketer from 1985 to 2015.

Schultz has demonstrated a strong commitment to community service. He currently serves as a director with Lions Club International and has previously served as president of his church leadership board, the Giddings Chamber of Commerce and the South Central Board of Realtors.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Texas A&M University and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.



James A. Anderle
(Incumbent)
Secretary-Treasurer
DISTRICT 5

James Anderle has served on the Fayette Electric Cooperative Board of Directors since 2016 and currently holds the position of secretary-treasurer. He is a graduate of Texas State Technical College in Waco and works as the maintenance manager at Muldoon

Minerals. He previously worked in technical field operations at CenterPoint Energy.

Anderle is an active member of his community and faith. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus Council No. 2574 in La Grange, KJT Society No. 1 in Praha and Holy Rosary ACTS. He is also a former member of the Smithville Lions Club.

In 2017, Anderle earned the Credentialed Cooperative Director certification from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, demonstrating his commitment to effective governance and service to the cooperative's members. ■

Your FEC Employees

NAME	TITLE	YEARS OF SERVICE	NAME	TITLE	YEARS OF SERVICE
Leonard Malota Jr.	Warehouse Supervisor	38	Aaron Tonn	Lineman	6
Robert Thomas	Dir. of Construction & Maintainance	36	Brian Zbranek	Staking Technician I	6
Leo J. Wick	Dir. of Engineering & Line Extension	28	Corey Brown	Journeyman Lineman	4
Brandon Pieper	Assistant General Manager/COO	27	Jessica Montez	Communications/Marketing Specialist	3
Greg Noak	Asst. Director of Construction and Maint.	26	Clayton Brossmann	Apprentice Lineman	3
Daniel Kovar	Warehouse Materials Clerk	23	Daniel Storm	Lineman	2
Tracy Denton	Director of Marketing, Comm. and Training	21	Amanda Wood	Consumer Records Clerk	1
Dana Janca	Engineering Assistant	19	Tyler Dockery	Asst. Director of IT and Operations	1
Steven Kallus	Journeyman Lineman	18	Angie Bayless	Accounting Assistant	1
Doyle "Tiger" Hall	ROW Maintenance Coordinator	17	Doug Lambert	General Manager/CEO	1
TC Muniz	Capital Credits Representative	14	Jaison Braun	Groundman	1
Justin Whited	Journeyman Lineman	11	Emily Purdy	Consumer Services Representative	0
Amy Rackley	Systems Operator I	9	James Kielty	Accounting and Finance Manager/CFO	0
Lezli Thomas	Consumer Services Representative	9	Mason Saleman	Apprentice Lineman	0
Mike Proske	Lineman	9	Ryan Rosenbaum	Apprentice Lineman	0
Shane Drosche	Apprentice Lineman	8	Rachel Barten	Executive Assistant	0
Joey Jasek	Journeyman Lineman	6			

The remaining 12 of our 45 employees are recognized for service awards below.

Employee Service Awards



Fayette Electric Cooperative is proud to recognize the dedication and commitment of our employees who continue to uphold our mission of delivering reliable electric service to our members. Our team includes individuals with decades of experience, those gaining new skills as they take on greater responsibilities, and others just beginning their journey with FEC. This year's service award recipients collectively represent an impressive 245 years of service—a testament to the strength, stability and continuity of our cooperative.

GRAB YOUR PIECE OF AMERICA'S SILVER LEGACY



99.9%
Fine Silver
Bars

Actual size is
30.6 x 50.4 mm

FILL YOUR VAULT WITH MORGAN SILVER BARS

Not only are these hefty bars one full Troy ounce of real, .999 precious silver, they're also beautiful, featuring the crisp image of a Morgan Silver Dollar struck onto the surface. That collectible image adds interest and makes these Silver Bars even more desirable. Minted in the U.S.A. from shimmering American silver, these one-ounce 99.9% fine silver bars are a great alternative to one-ounce silver coins or rounds. Plus, they offer great savings compared to other bullion options like one-ounce sovereign silver coins. Take advantage of our special offer for new customers only and save \$10.00 off our regular prices.

Morgan Silver Dollars Are Among the Most Iconic Coins in U.S. History

What makes them iconic? The Morgan Silver Dollar is the legendary coin that built the Wild West. It exemplifies the American spirit like few other coins, and was created using silver mined from the famous Comstock Lode in Nevada. In fact, when travelers approached the mountains around the boomtown of Virginia City, Nevada in the 1850s, they were startled to see the hills shining in the sunlight like a mirror. A mirage

caused by weary eyes? No, rather the effect came from tiny flecks of silver glinting in the sun.

A Special Way For You to Stock Up On Precious Silver

While no one can predict the future value of silver in an uncertain economy, many Americans are rushing to get their hands on as much silver as possible, putting it away for themselves and their loved ones. You'll enjoy owning these Silver Bars. They're tangible. They feel good when you hold them. You'll relish the design and thinking about all it represents. These Morgan Design One-Ounce Bars make appreciated gifts for birthdays, anniversaries and graduations, creating a legacy sure to be cherished for a lifetime.

Order More and SAVE

You can save \$10.00 off our regular price when you buy now. There is a limit of 25 Bars per customer, which means with this special offer, you can save up to \$250.

Hurry—Secure Yours Now

Call right now to secure your .999 fine silver Morgan Design One-Ounce Silver Bars. You'll be glad you did.



One-Ounce Silver Morgan Design Bar
\$49.95 ea.

Special offer - \$39.95 ea. +s/h **BUY MORE
SAVE MORE!**
SAVE \$10 - \$250

Limit of 25 bars per customer

Free 1-oz Silver Bullet -
.45 Caliber Pistol Round Replica
with every order over \$299
(A \$69.95 value!)



FREE SHIPPING over \$99!

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The Fast Track

The Father of Country Music yodeled his way into hearts, proclaiming a special love for Texas

BY CLAY COPPEDGE

IT'S HARD FOR people today to understand just how popular singer and songwriter Jimmie Rodgers was during the 1920s and '30s. Think Elvis in the '50s, the Beatles in the '60s or Taylor Swift today. Southerners joked that the typical Depression-era shopping list was a pound of butter, slab of bacon, sack of flour and the new Rodgers record.

Rodgers was born in Mississippi in 1897, but he declared in song that Texas was "a state I dearly love." He proved it by moving here in 1929.

He grew up the son of a railroad gang foreman but showed a fondness and knack for show business from an early age. Convinced he was well on his way to fame and fortune after winning a talent

contest when he was 14, he ran away from home with a traveling medicine show before his father put him to work on the railroad.

In 1924, when he was 27 years old, doctors diagnosed Rodgers with tuberculosis. Sensing that his time was short, he quit the railroad and devoted himself to playing music. Over the years, he had compiled a repertoire that included traditional folk songs, jazz, blues, vaudeville tunes and yodels—the sounds of America.

Rodgers played on street corners and at tent shows—anywhere he could. He performed at an Asheville, North Carolina, radio station in 1927 with the Tenneva Ramblers. And when the band

learned that the Victor Talking Machine Co. (later RCA Records) was holding recording sessions in Bristol, Tennessee, they decided to go. Until the Bristol sessions, radio stations didn't play country records because they had precious few to play.

The two songs Rodgers recorded in Bristol didn't do much, but a second session, in Camden, New Jersey, included *Blue Yodel No. 1*, which sold a half-million copies and is better known as *T for Texas*.

Rodgers recorded more than 100 songs over the next few years, including classics like *In the Jailhouse Now*, *Frankie and Johnny*, and *Waiting for a Train*. He reportedly sold more than 10 million records in his lifetime—more than any other RCA Victor artist pre-Elvis.

As his health worsened, Rodgers limited his touring to the Southwest. Nearly every Texas town, regardless of size, has a Rodgers sighting in its history. Once, after a performance in Temple in 1929, he returned to his motel and started singing from the window of his room, drawing such a crowd that cops had to be called to break up the ensuing traffic jam.

Rodgers moved to Kerrville in 1929 in hopes that the Hill Country air might give him some relief from the tuberculosis that was slowly killing him. He built a house at the intersection of West Main Street and Jackson Road and called it Blue Yodeler's Paradise.

In 1933, a gaunt and ailing Rodgers traveled to New York to make 12 new records. He recorded his last song May 24 and died two days later. He was 35.

Though his time was brief, his legacy looms large. Country performers including Merle Haggard, Ernest Tubb and Johnny Cash cited Rodgers as a major influence, but so did blues singers Mance Lipscomb, Howlin' Wolf and Mississippi John Hurt and rockers like Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Rodgers is the only artist to be inducted into the country music, rock 'n' roll and blues halls of fame, and that says it all. ■

Make It Spicy

Peppers put on quite a show as the lead act

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ, FOOD EDITOR

I am a salsa girl—hit me with all the spicy goodness! But why are tomatoes always the star? Frankly, I'm a little tired of it. It's high time we gave fruit the kick it deserves. Bring on the pineapple and mango, and say hello to this exciting salsa!

Pineapple Salsa

4 cups diced pineapple (about 1 medium pineapple)
2 cups diced mango (about 2 large mangoes)
½ cup minced red onion
1 small jalapeño pepper, finely diced
½ cup diced red bell pepper
¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
Juice of 1 large lime
1 teaspoon salt
Tortilla chips, for serving

COOK'S TIP To serve your salsa in the pineapple, slice the pineapple in half lengthwise. Cut around the edges of the pineapple, being careful not to pierce through the rind, to remove the inside of the fruit before dicing. After Step 1 below, spoon salsa into pineapple shell, place on serving platter and continue to Step 2.

1. In a large bowl, combine pineapple, mango, onion, jalapeño, bell pepper, cilantro, lime juice and salt. Gently stir together to incorporate.
2. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes.
3. Serve chilled with tortilla chips.

SERVES 8

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





Sautéed Spicy Corn

RICK GUTIERREZ
GVEC

If you love the flavor of grilled corn but not eating it off the cob, sautéed spicy corn is the summer side for you. Sautéing fresh corn kernels with a bit of butter and jalapeños enhances the corn flavor while producing tender kernels with a bite.

- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter**
- 6 ears corn, kernels removed from cob, or 3 cans golden sweet whole kernel corn (15 ounces each), drained**
- 1 fresh jalapeño pepper, minced**
- ½ cup chicken broth**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**

- 1.** In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter.
- 2.** Add corn, jalapeño, chicken broth, salt and pepper.
- 3.** Cook, stirring frequently, until corn is tender, about 12–15 minutes.

SERVES 6

\$500 WINNER

Zesty Spaghetti Salad

NANCY HORTON
DEEP EAST TEXAS EC



Get ready to sharpen those dicing skills because this salad is a total game changer! We're talking about a colorful medley of diced veggies that comes together in the most delightful way and makes every moment spent chopping absolutely worth it. This zesty salad dazzled my taste buds.



- 16 ounces uncooked spaghetti, broken in half**
- 2½ cups halved grape tomatoes**
- 2 small zucchinis, diced**
- 1 English cucumber, diced**
- 1 yellow bell pepper, seeds removed, diced**
- 1 red bell pepper, seeds removed, diced**
- ½ cup sliced banana peppers, drained**
- 1 cup thinly sliced hard salami**
- ½ cup diced pepperoni**
- 1½ cups zesty Italian dressing**
- 2½ tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons black sesame seeds**
- 1 teaspoon poppy seeds (optional)**
- ½ teaspoon paprika**
- ½ teaspoon celery seed**
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- Dried chives or fresh garlic chives, for garnish**

- 1.** Cook spaghetti according to package directions, rinse with cold water, drain and place in a large bowl.
- 2.** Add tomatoes, zucchini, cucumber, yellow and red bell peppers, banana peppers, salami, and pepperoni to spaghetti and gently mix to combine.
- 3.** In another bowl, whisk together Italian dressing, Parmesan, sesame seeds, poppy seeds (if using), paprika, celery seed, garlic powder, black pepper, red pepper flakes and salt. Pour over pasta salad and mix until well coated.
- 4.** Refrigerate at least 2 hours to blend flavors. Garnish with chives and serve chilled.

SERVES 8

TCP \$500 Recipe Contest

HOLIDAY BREAKFAST DUE JULY 10

Christmas dinner gets all the attention, but what about that morning? Share your best holiday breakfast recipe that can feed a crowd, and you could win \$500. Enter by July 10.

UPCOMING: OODLES OF NOODLES DUE AUGUST 10



CONTINUED ON PAGE 28 >

Pecan-Stuffed Jalapeños

GARY CRANE
VICTORIA EC

Holy jalapeños, these are good. I'm not lying—I devoured four during recipe testing. (That's right, four.) No need to worry about too much spice when baking these up. The seeds are removed, and the peppers are stuffed with a cheesy pecan mixture that softens the heat.

10 large jalapeño peppers

1 package cream cheese (8 ounces), softened

½ cup chopped pecans

2 green onions, minced

¼ cup medium-heat red salsa

½ teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon ground cumin

½ teaspoon garlic powder

or 2 cloves garlic, diced

¼ teaspoon orange or lemon zest

½ cup shredded cheddar cheese



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or foil.
2. Slice the top off each jalapeño and slice in half lengthwise. Remove seeds and place jalapeños on prepared baking sheet.
3. Bake jalapeños 30 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool 10 minutes.
4. In a bowl, stir together cream cheese, pecans, green onions, salsa, salt, cumin, garlic and zest until combined.
5. Fill each jalapeño half with cream cheese filling and return to baking sheet.

Beat the Heat

BY VIANNEY RODRIGUEZ

Wear kitchen gloves when handling chiles to protect skin from capsaicin, the element that makes chiles hot. In a pinch, use sandwich bags.

Protect skin if not wearing gloves by running a knife under the ribs of seeds to remove.

Avoid touching eyes and face when working with chiles—wash hands with dish soap first.

To minimize burning on skin, apply a little oil—olive, canola or vegetable—as capsaicin dissolves in oil.

6. Sprinkle jalapeños with cheddar, return to oven and bake 10 minutes. Serve warm.

MAKES 20 HALVES

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- J.P. Morgan*



COURTESY CHET GARNER

Lodged in Time

Visit 1840s Castroville at the Landmark Inn State Historic Site

BY CHET GARNER

I WAS LYING in bed but felt like I was in a creepy movie. I imagined all the travelers who had slept in my room since the 1800s and wondered if any of them had met a sudden and unexpected ending. I eventually fell asleep and when I woke up (alive), I found myself in one of the most peaceful and historic places in Texas.

Castroville, 25 miles west of San Antonio, was settled in the 1840s by immigrants from the Alsace region of France. The inn, which emerged from a house built in 1849, is among a cluster of buildings that today is part of the Landmark Inn State Historic Site. The inn originally served as a hub for this immigrant community.

But this site is more than the stark-white, two-story building where I stayed overnight. It's an entire block of buildings that tell the story of grit and industry in the Hill Country.

Over the years, the property passed from one owner to another. While some of the buildings have fallen into disrepair, many are still standing.

There's a wash house, where bygone travelers could take a much-needed bath, and the home of Rowena Vance, a schoolteacher from Vermont and one of the original matriarchs of the property. There's a gristmill, where two giant stones worked 12 hours a day providing grains to the townsfolk and which decades later was converted to a hydroelectric power plant to electrify Castroville. The property was gifted to the state in 1974 and transferred to the Texas Historical Commission in 2008.

Every story I heard added a ripple to the complex tale of life in Texas over the past 175 years. I counted myself fortunate to have stayed in one of the eight historic rooms the inn offers modern guests. ■

ABOVE Chet spent the night in one of the eight historic rooms in the Landmark Inn.

TCP Watch the video on our website and see all Chet's 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.

JULY

10

Claude [10–12] Caprock Roundup, (806) 310-9044, claudetexas.com

Mason [10–12] Mason County Roundup Weekend, (325) 347-5758, masontx.org

11

Corsicana Food Truck Friday, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

McDade [11–12] Watermelon Festival, (512) 980-4456, mcdadetexas.com

Laredo [11–13] International Sister Cities Festival, (956) 795-2200, visitalaredo.com

Hico [11–12, 15–19] Old Settler's Reunion, (254) 434-1249, hicoctxchamber.org

12

Corsicana Mimosas at the Market, (903) 654-4850, visitcorsicana.com

Galveston Old Smokey Throwdown, (409) 765-5778, albatrossgalveston.net

Grapevine Ice Cream Social, (817) 410-3185, grapevinetexasusa.com

Weatherford Parker County Peach Festival, (817) 596-3801, peachfestivaltx.com

Winnsboro Adam and Chris Carroll, (903) 342-0686, winnsborocenterforthearts.com

Lewisville [12–Aug. 9] All Natural, visualartleague.org

15

Fort Worth [15–20] The Wiz, (817) 212-4280, basshall.com



Pick of the Month

Fuzzy Peach Festival

Fairfield, July 18-19

(903) 389-5792

fairfieldtexaschamber.com

Cool off during this two-day festival east of Waco. Enjoy music, vendors, cornhole, food and lots of water activities.



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18

Brenham The Great DuBois:

Masters of Variety,

(979) 337-7240,

thebarnhillcenter.com

Huntsville [18-19] Texas

Thimble Trail, (936) 329-1376,

texashtimbletrail.com

Fredericksburg [18-20]

Trade Days, (210) 846-4094,

fbgtradedays.com

Palestine [18-20, 25-27]

Alice in Wonderland,

(903) 394-2173,

thetexas theater.com



19

Friona Cheeseburger

Festival & Cook-Off,

(806) 250-3491,

friona-chamber.com

Lewisville [19-Aug. 16]

Nouveau West,

visualartleague.org

MORE EVENTS >

TCP Submit Your Event

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



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Event Calendar

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JULY EVENTS CONTINUED

23

Winnsboro [23–Sept. 20]
Women in the Arts,
 (903) 342-0686, winnsboro
centerforthearts.com

26

Buffalo Gap Tour De Gap,
 (325) 829-0617,
tourdegap.com

24

Clute [24–26] Great Texas Mosquito Festival,
 (979) 265-8392,
mosquitofestival.com

Sargent [24–26] Hooked on Sargent Fishing Rodeo,
 (985) 258-8233,
hookedonsargent.org

25

Fredericksburg [25–27] Hill Country Swap Meet,
 (254) 751-7958,
earhartproductions.com

Grapevine Disco Wine Train, (817) 410-3185,
grapevinetexasusa.com

AUGUST

1

Anna Kenny Chesney Covered by Barefoot Nation, (972) 560-4101,
barnhillvineyards.com

El Campo [1–3] Lagoon Fest, (979) 275-1600,
eclostlagoon.com

2

Granbury Blazin' Saddle 75,
blazinsaddle75.com

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Catch of the Day

This nautical haul leaves us reeling with excitement! Fishing out the best ones was easy as shooting fish in a barrel. There may be bigger fish to fry, but these folks seem pretty pleased with what's on the line.

CURATED BY GRACE FULTZ



1 JENNIFER MATULA
VICTORIA EC

"Her first big redfish that she brought in on her own."

2 RAYMOND TESTA
FARMERS EC

"I caught the moment that a bass struck at this lure in Royse City."

3 TOM HERRIN
PEDERNALES EC

"A mature bald eagle catches lunch in the Mississippi River during the dead of winter."

4 RAY BEDNAR
BLUEBONNET EC

"A kingfisher about to have a large lunch."



Upcoming Contests

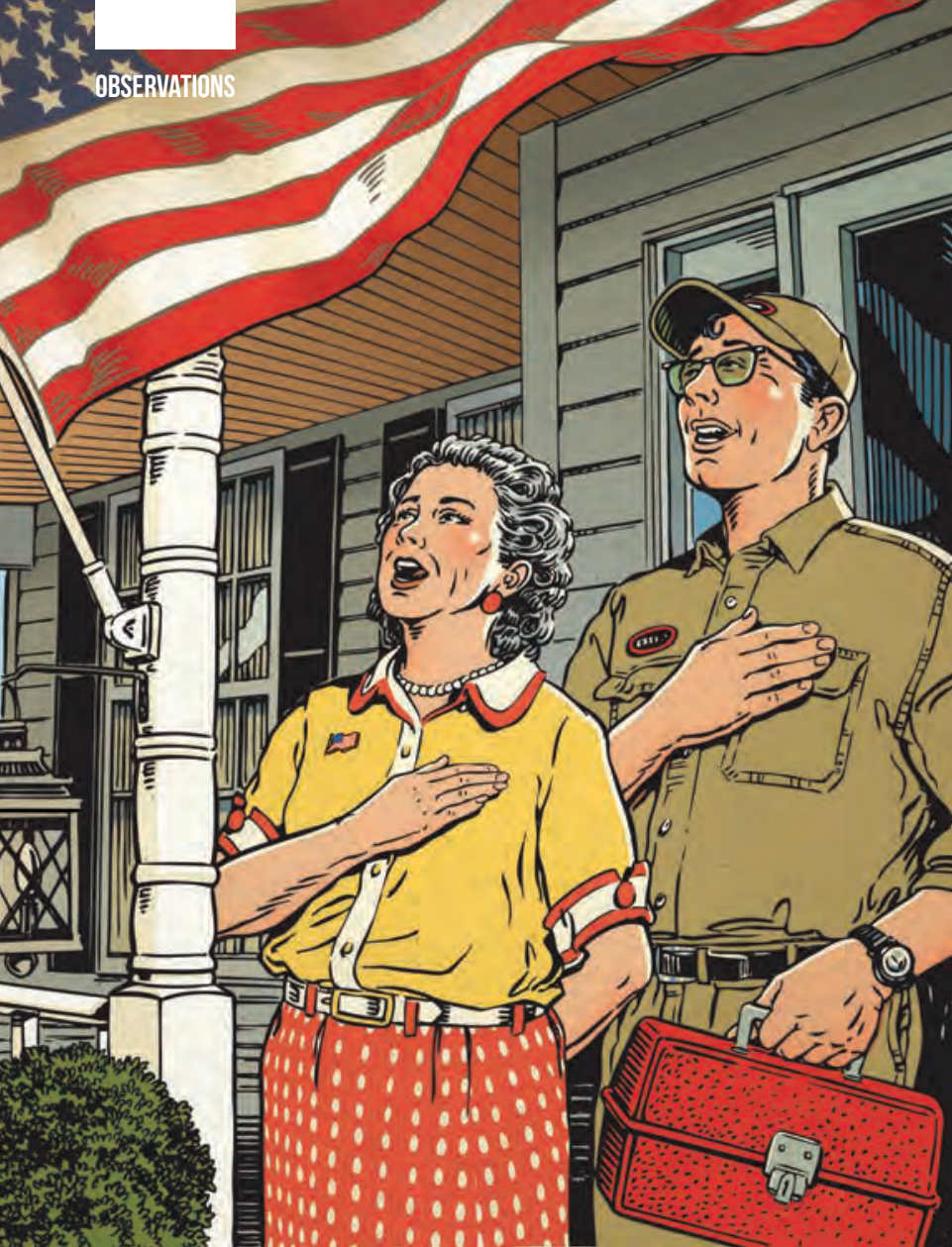
DUE JUL 10 Abstract
DUE AUG 10 Country Life
DUE SEP 10 Snakes Alive!



Enter online at TexasCoopPower.com/contests.

TCP See Focus on Texas on our website for many more Catch of the Day photos from readers.





Liberty Belle

One grandmother's unmatched poetic love for the red, white and blue

BY CAROL GENE GRAVES
ILLUSTRATION BY JOHN KACHIK

MY GRANDMOTHER LOVED America and felt every citizen should share her patriotism. She instilled her fervent patriotism in me—and everyone around her.

Her love of country was not reserved just for holidays like the Fourth of July but was a belief she carried out daily.

When I visited her in the summer, we would put out the American flag on her front porch on Main Street in the small Central Texas town of Gatesville. When the flag was in place, she would stand erect and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

If any unsuspecting soul was walking down the street, Grandmother would throw out a strong invitation to join us: "Come on up and say the pledge with us!" I don't think anyone dared to turn down Mrs. McCoy's strong invitation.

In Grandmother's bedroom was a

patriotic shrine: a framed copy of the preamble to the Constitution draped with a small American flag. Stuck to the side of the frame was a picture postcard my family had sent her from Philadelphia when we vacationed there. She was so thrilled that I had personally seen the Liberty Bell.

The bell had great significance for Grandmother because her favorite poem was *Independence Bell*. It's a dramatic poem, possibly written by American author Charles Brockden Brown, that recounts the adoption of the Declaration of Independence. Would the 56 delegates to the second Continental Congress declare the colonies free in July 1776?

The poem's setting is a hot, jittery Philadelphia as citizens stand before the Pennsylvania State House waiting for news. I can still see Grandmother the last time she recited this poem by memory for our family.

"Will they do it?" "Dare they do it?"

"Who is speaking?" "What's the news?"

"What of Adams?" "What of Sherman?"

"Oh, God grant they won't refuse!"

We could only be expectant as Grandmother described the old bellman, who was waiting "with one hand ready on the clapper of the bell." Then the old man's grandson brings him the news. He shouts, "Ring, Grandpapa, ring!"

Grandmother swelled with pride as she proclaimed this and concluded the poem:

*We will ne'er forget the bellman
Who, betwixt the earth and sky,
Rung out loudly, "Independence";
Which, please God, shall never die!*

Grandmother died January 19, 1981, and the next day was one of high national drama. Not only did we say goodbye to her, but we also watched Ronald Reagan be sworn in as America's 40th president and were thrilled at the return of 52 American hostages from captivity in Iran.

We flew Grandmother's flag that day to celebrate the hostages' return, but it was more our family's way of remembering Grandmother and how much she loved America. ■

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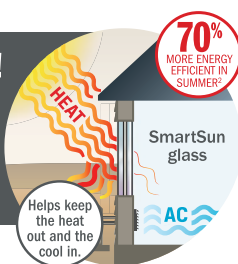
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Registration Card

Fayette Electric Cooperative will hold its annual meeting
July 16, 2025,
at the KC Community Center in La Grange.
Member Registration Begins at 5:30 p.m.
Business Meeting Begins at 7 p.m.

This is to certify that I am an active member of Fayette Electric Cooperative, Inc.
in attendance at the annual membership meeting on July 16, 2025.

Ballot Number _____ **Issued By** _____

Signed _____

Phone Number(s) _____

Email Address _____

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- ▶ Members must be present to vote at the meeting.
- ▶ Each member shall be entitled to one vote and no more upon each matter submitted to a vote at the meeting.
- ▶ At all membership meetings, the spouse of a member will be allowed to vote the membership, whether single or joint.
- ▶ If a husband and wife or two persons hold a joint membership, they shall jointly be entitled to one vote.
- ▶ In the event of the death of a person holding a joint membership, the surviving member alone may vote.
- ▶ A membership held by a school, community hall or similar public body shall be voted by the president or chairman of the board or, if so authorized in writing, by any one member of the board.
- ▶ The pastor or, if so authorized in writing, any one member of the governing body of a church holding membership in the cooperative shall cast the vote of the church.
- ▶ A membership held by any corporation, partnership, firm, government agency or political subdivision shall be voted by any person submitting proof of their authority to vote the membership.
- ▶ Every cooperative member is allowed to vote for one director in each district, regardless of which district the member lives in.

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