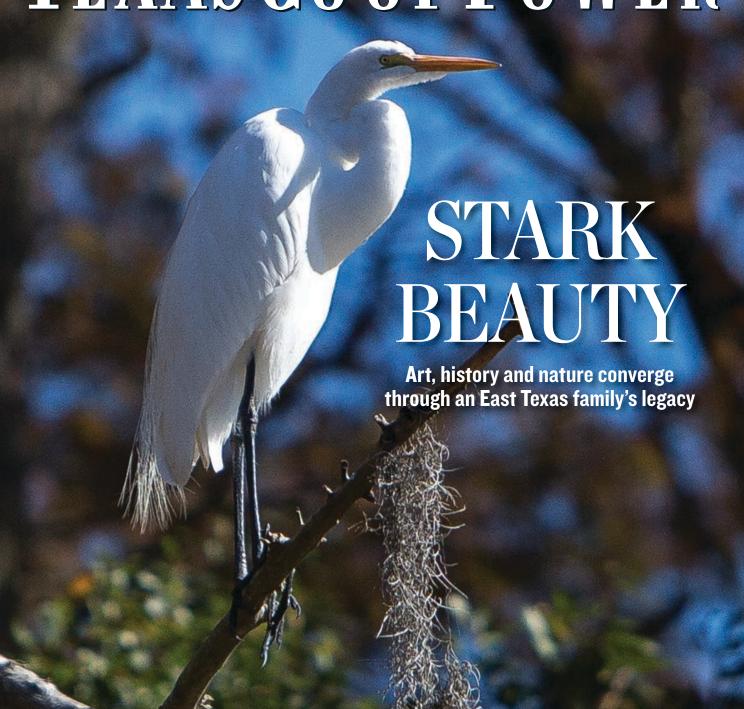
Historic Plains Drawings

Horses' Lineage

Spirits of Seguin







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FEATURES

Firmly Rooted The Stark family of Orange forged cultural destinations that offer art, history and nature.

Story and Photos by Julia Robinson

Cultural Accounting Nineteenth-century drawings offer insight into natives' Plains perspective.

By Charles Lohrmann

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By Chet Garner

Around Texas

Event listings are suspended due to COVID-19 cancellations.

ONLINE

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Texas USA

Hunting Topaz By Brenda Kissko

Texas Faces

 $\begin{array}{c} \textit{An Outsize Legacy} \\ \textbf{By Lonn Taylor} \end{array}$



We Brake for Queso A belt-busting, cheesetopped tour of the best Tex-Mex dishes in San Antonio—ground zero for the beloved cuisine.



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ON THE COVER A great egret at the Stark Foundation's Shangri La Botanical Gardens in Orange. Photo by Julia Robinson

TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Alan Lesley, Chair, Comanche; Robert Loth III, Vice Chair, Fredericksburg; Gary Raybon, Secretary-Treasurer, El Campo; Mark Boyd, Douglassville; Greg Henley, Tahoka; Billy Jones, Corsicana; David McGinnis, Van Alstyne • PRESIDENT/CEO: Mike Williams, Austin • COMMUNICATIONS & MEMBER SERVICES COMMITTEE: Marty Haught, Burleson; Bill Hetherington, Bandera; Ron Hughes, Sinton; Boyd McCamish, Littlefield; Mark McClain, Roby; John Ed Shinpaugh, Bonham; Robert Walker, Gilmer; Brandon Young, McGregor • MAGAZINE STAFF: Martin Bevins, Vice President, Communications & Member Services; Charles J. Lohrmann, Editor; Tom Widlowski, Associate Editor; Karen Nejtek, Production Manager; Andy Doughty, Creative Manager; Elaine Sproull, Advertising Manager; Chris Burrows, Senior Communications Specialist; Grace Fultz, Print Production Specialist; Travis Hill, Communications Specialist; Megan Myers, Food Editor; Jessica Ridge, Communications Specialist; Chris Salazar, Digital Field Editor; Jane Sharpe, Senior Designer; Kristin Wise, Digital Media Intern; Shannon Oelrich. Proofreader



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BRUCE LAMB | VIA FACEBOOK

Get to the Point

I kept looking for a reference to the "correct" pronunciation, according to my Texas-born and -raised husband, of the words barbed wire-"bob wire" [Sharpening My Knowledge, March 2020].

ANITA CARSWELL | GEORGETOWN PEDERNALES EC

Editor's Note: Check out Chet Garner's video with the story on our website. He notes the "proper" pronunciation, though it's a variation on this one.

Masterful Illustration

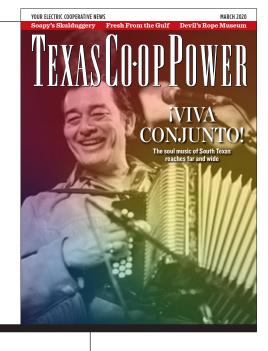
I enjoyed the article but even much more so the clever illustration of crape murder [Crape Murder, February 2020]. Michael Koelsch is pure genius with his depiction of the terrorized housewife with the painting of her beloved crape myrtle tree, while outside, her menacing husband viciously commits the heinous act of crape murder. This illustration could easily be the cover of a midcentury Nancy Drew Mystery Stories I collected as a girl. **ELIZABETH WALTERS** | BURNET

Cut off crape myrtles as close to the ground as your saw can get. Then prune off subsequent suckers. Replace with native trees that support butterflies, humming-

Squeezebox Cues

The articles about the accordion just took me back to my childhood [Soul Music of South Texas and Texas' Main Squeeze, March 2020]. I grew up listening to my dad play the accordion and sing Czech songs. Talk about going down memory lane.

BARB SCHROEDER | SCHULENBURG | FAYETTE EC



Like the tallow tree people seem to love for its hardiness, the cumulative effect of crape myrtles is that of a destructive invasive species.

JOE FLARITY | OAKHURST SAM HOUSTON EC

Around the Clock

I really enjoyed the picture of the Wise County Courthouse in the March Letters. My wife's grandfather. Daniel Jensen, a jeweler and watchmaker, was hired back in the early years of the 20th century to keep the clock on top of that courthouse running properly. I wonder if anyone sees to the clock's functioning these days.

DAN TEED | MCKINNEY

A Mother's Love

Only a mother's love could have recognized that the picture of the raising of our American flag

over Iwo Jima included her son [A Texan at Iwo Jima, February 20201. Belle Block recognized her son in that splendid image. Also, most amazing, she recognized him from his back in a crouching position. She must have had a million images stored of him in her memory and heart as he grew up. FRED SMITH JR. | BUNA

I wonder how many Americans know that the picture taken by Joe Rosenthal was in fact the second flag raised on Mount Suribachi. The first flag raised

JASPER-NEWTON EC

was a smaller flag.

I write this to bring a littleknown fact to the public's attention and to honor Cpl. Charles W. Lindberg, who passed in 2007 as the last living flag raiser on Mount Suribachi. He was in the squad of Marines responsible for the first flag raised, and I have a picture, autographed by him, of the squad during the first raising. **DONALD GRUBBS** | VICTORIA VICTORIA EC

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





Texas Co-op Power

birds and other native wildlife.

TEXAS CO-OP POWER VOLUME 76, NUMBER 11 (USPS 540-560). Texas Co-op Power is published monthly by Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). Periodical postage paid at Austin, TX, and at additional offices. TEC is the statewide association representing 75 electric cooperatives. Texas Co-op Power's website is TexasCoopPower.com. Call (512) 454-0311 or email editor@TexasCoopPower.com. SUBSCRIPTION PRICE is \$4.20 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. Individual copies and back issues are available for \$3 each. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Texas Co-op Power (USPS 540-560), 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. Please enclose label from this copy of Texas Co-op Power showing old address and key numbers. ADVERTISING: Advertisers interested in buying display ad space in Texas Co-op Power and/or in our 30 sister publications in other states, contact Elaine Sproull at (512) 486-6251, Advertisements in Texas Co-op Power are paid solicitations. The publisher neither endorses nor guarantees in any manner any product or company included in this publication. Product satisfaction and delivery responsibility lie solely with the advertiser.

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PEDERNALES EC

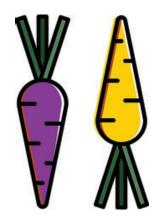
RURAL LIVING

The Future Looks Bright

THE NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION reached a milestone late last year: 700,000 members. The student organization that supports and promotes agricultural education has chapters in all 50 states. Of course, the Texas chapter is the largest, with more than 137,000 members who "believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds."



NATURE



THE FIRST **CULTIVATED** CARROTS WERE PURPLE OR YELLOW.

TECH KNOWLEDGE

Current Favorite

One year into committing his family to an electric vehicle, John Kent, in a column for The Dallas Morning News, called his Tesla "the best thing I've ever paid money for."

Kent said the vehicle has easily handled trips to Oklahoma City, Austin, Houston and Santa Rosa Beach, Florida, with a range that tops out at about 264 miles.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Counting on You

The 2020 U.S. census is well underway. The 2010 census showed that nearly half of all U.S. Latinos lived in two states: 28% in California, 19% in Texas.

FINISH THIS SENTENCE

The best part about being a mom is . . .

► **Tell us how** you would finish that sentence. Email your short responses to letters@TexasCoopPower.com or post them on our Facebook page. Please include your city and co-op.

Below are some of the responses to our March prompt: Why do dogs always ...

Quickly find a way into your heart?

AL AND JUDY WILSON | NORTHLAKE COSERV

Want to go outside as soon as I sit down to do something? KAY STRICKLIN | SEGUIN GUADALUPE VALLEY EC Bark at doorbells on TV even if they've never heard a doorbell in real life? EMILEE ENSMINGER | FORT WORTH TRI-COUNTY EC

Go to sleep so fast? Elizabeth and george Morgan San angelo | Concho Valley EC Love us when we think there's nobody else who does?
MIKE CATES | BELLS | GRAYSON-COLLIN EC

Hate to have a bath but love to go for a swim in a muddy, algae-covered pond?

DARLA REGNER | BARTLETT | BARTLETT EC



LIFESTYLE

SPLASH ACROSS TEXAS

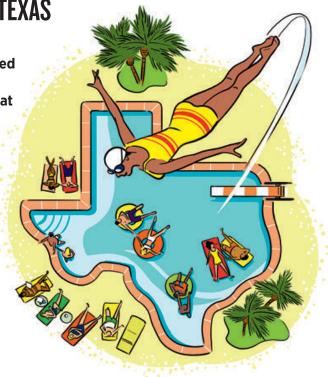
To see more responses, read Currents on our website.

In search of a Texas-sized photo op this summer?
Here are some pools that are Texas-shaped, too.

HOUSTON The Marriott Marquis' 550-foot-long rooftop lazy river opened in 2016.

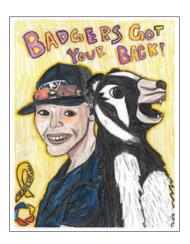
KERRVILLE The pool at the Holiday Inn Express has a lone star at the bottom that puts the city on the map.

PLANO The Texas Pool, a 168,000-gallon saltwater pool that opened in 1959, boasts a Panhandle diving board and South Texas wading area.



Know of a Texas-shaped pool near you? Let us know: letters@TexasCoopPower.com. CO-OP PEOPLE

Badgers Got Your Back



When Taylor Electric Cooperative

asked students to submit designs for a billboard contest, one entry stood out from all the others to win the grand prize.

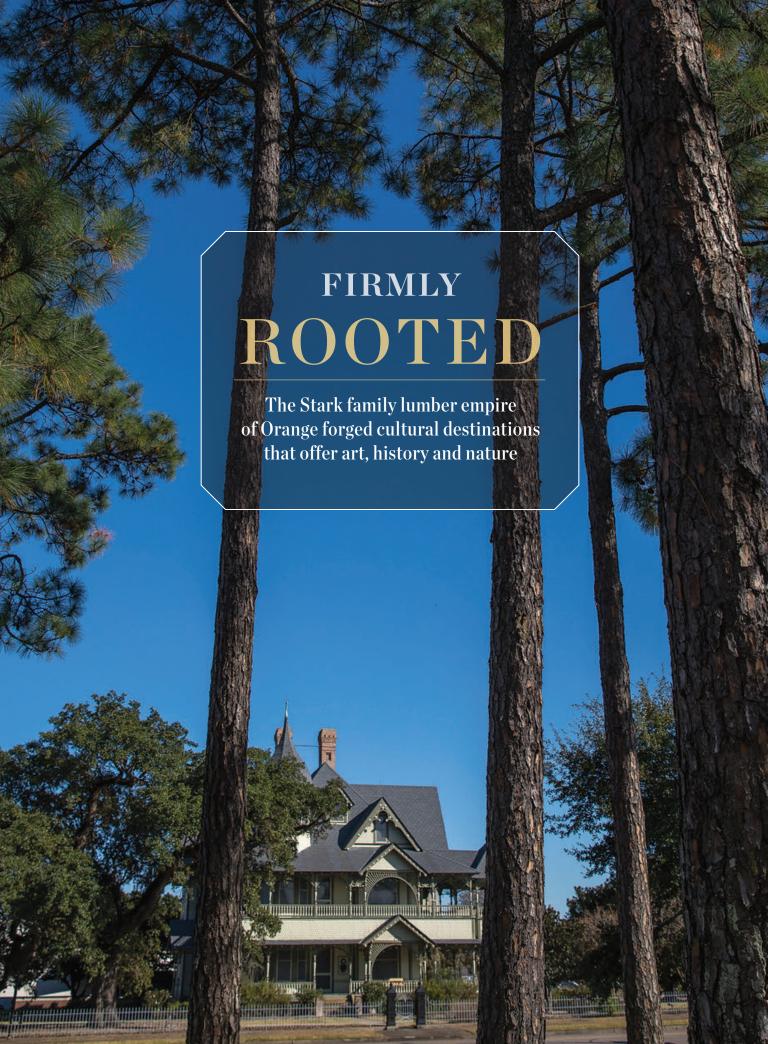
Bailey Casady at Merkel Elementary School drew fellow fifth grader Logan Malone, who is fighting cancer, alongside the school's mascot and "Badgers got your back."

"This sweet student showed us that her love of her community comes in their support of the Malone family and Logan as they go through a tough cancer battle," said Elizabeth McVey, Taylor EC public relations and communications manager. "It surprised the contest committee that a student so young would respond in such a way."

SPORTS SECTION

SPORT OF KING

Two Texas-bred horses have won the Kentucky Derby: Assault in 1946 and Middleground in 1950. Both were from the King Ranch.



STORY AND PHOTOS BY JULIA ROBINSON







THE STORY OF

the Stark and Lutcher families in Orange mirrors the rise of the East Texas economy after the Civil War. During the last quarter of the 19th century, grain milling, ranching and cotton were the region's top producers. The timberlands remained relatively untouched, and because forests were considered an impediment to arable farmland, timber acreage could be bought cheap.

Henry J. Lutcher, a lumberman from Pennsylvania, visited East Texas with his business partner in 1876 and moved to Orange, on the Sabine River, the following year. He purchased 500,000 acres of timberland across the Sabine in southwest Louisiana and built a state-of-theart sawmill.

The expansion of railroads in Texas helped fill demand for lumber

products ranging from barrel staves to wood siding, and Texas lumbering experienced a boom that continued until the Great Depression. Through this 50-year industry expansion, the Lutcher and Moore Lumber Company became a leader in the quantity and quality of finished lumber products in the state.

William Henry Stark, a native Texan working in the mill, married Lutcher's daughter, Miriam, and moved into management of the family business. That union of families would transform the Orange community over the next several decades.

In 21st-century Orange, the legacy of W.H. and Miriam Lutcher Stark, along with that of their son, H.J. Lutcher Stark, who went by Lutcher throughout his life, continues through



Clockwise from opposite page: The W.H. Stark House is a 14,000square-foot home built of cypress and longleaf pine in 1894. Henry J. Lutcher: Miriam, his daughter; and William Henry Stark, who married Miriam. The library of the Stark House.

venues managed by the Stark Foundation: the W.H. Stark House, the Stark Museum of Art and the Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center.

"The Lutcher-Stark Family would have been some of the wealthiest in the state before the oil boom and still among the richest even after it," explains Joshua Cole, W.H. Stark House interpretation and programming manager.





The Stark House's dining room is set for a formal evening with one of the many sets of dinnerware the Stark family used.

STARK MUSEUM OF ART

ne block away from the Stark House waits the modern architectural contrast of the two-story Stark Museum of Art. Opened in 1978, the white marble building, with its 60,000 square feet of exhibition, storage and museum facility space, was designed to withstand hurricane winds of 200 mph.

The 9,000-piece museum collection emphasizes art of the American West, much of it collected by Lutcher Stark. Iconic sculptures by Frederic Remington and Hermon Atkins MacNeil dominate the entry atrium. Remington's work is of a bucking bronco, and MacNeil's bronze depicts a Native American child learning from an elder. Porcelain sculptures of American birds by Dorothy Doughty line the atrium's walls, and weavings by Navajo women working in the post-reservation period hang from the balcony.

"The theme is exploring America's frontiers through the early 19th-century artists who traveled into the West primarily to

W.H. STARK HOUSE

he W.H. Stark House, a 14,000-square-foot, 15-room Queen Anne revival mansion, is a Texas Historic Landmark and appears on the National Register of Historic Places. Completed in 1894 and inhabited by the family until 1936, the house was an architectural and cultural anchor for the nascent community of Orange and remains one of the few area mansions fully restored and open to the public.

"When this house was built, [there were] dirt streets and cowboys shooting guns in the air," says Cole. "This house, paving the streets, bringing electricity, the churches—all this is about domesticating what was a frontier border lumber boomtown."

The Stark home was not the largest in Orange or even the largest on Green Avenue when it was built. What set the house apart was its exquisite wood finishes. As the only surviving house of its size, it now dominates the neighborhood, with pitched gables and dormers, detailed woodwork, and wraparound porches.

The exterior walls combine two layers of diagonal cypress, Cole points out. "Whichever way the wind blows, this house gets tighter in a storm," he says. In the foyer, cypress and longleaf pine exude a warm glow, and pine panels, intricate moldings and detailed lathe work line most surfaces of the house.

"This home was not only gorgeous; it was completely modern with all the latest modern conveniences," Cole says. "It was fully electrified, with indoor plumbing, making it one of the very first homes in the world to have those core technologies."

At its peak in the early 20th century, the house was staffed by 15 full-time employees, including a cook, butler, maid, nurse, chauffeur, laundress and gardener, some of whom lived on the grounds in the carriage house and servants' quarters.

Visitors can tour three levels of beautifully preserved rooms lined with yellow silk wallpaper, original family furniture and rugs, original ceiling murals painted on canvas, formal porcelain dining sets and Brilliant Period cut glass.



A John James Audubon painting of mockingbirds from his personal copy of *Birds of America*, a signature piece at the Stark Museum of Art.

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Above: The Stark Museum houses 9,000 pieces from the 19th- and 20th-century American West. Right: The museum holds the only complete collection of the United States in crystal by Steuben glass, which includes engraved bowls depicting a scene or theme for each state.

record and document what was then unknown," says museum curator Sarah Boehme.

One of the museum's signature pieces is John James Audubon's personal copy of *Birds of America* in enormous double elephant folio, one of only 100 remaining in the world. "Audubon set out to record and document every species of American bird, to show them life-size and in their natural habitat," Boehme explains. "To disseminate this information, he had to make 435 prints and produce them as a book." The volume, set under glass, is 39.5 inches tall and 28.5 inches wide, and the book is opened to a bird that complements concurrent exhibitions.

Ron Tyler, retired director of Fort Worth's Amon Carter Museum of American Art, explains that the Stark's Audubon collection is important not only because it includes Audubon's own portfolio but also because of the naturalist's letters, documents, sketches and paintings.

Tyler also cites the Stark's John Mix Stanley painting of the treaty scene between the Republic of Texas and Native Americans at Tehuacana Creek near Waco in 1843.

In a nearby, specially lit hall, crystal bowls by the Steuben

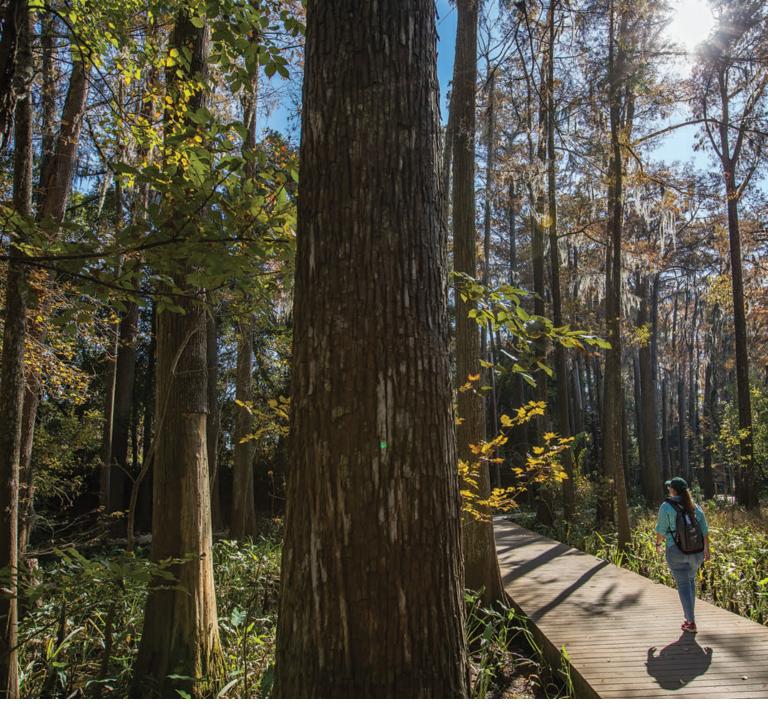


glass company glitter as if illuminated from within. They comprise the world's only complete collection of the United States in crystal, which includes a specific motif for each of the 50 states and one more for the United States.

In another gallery, the work of Native American artists shifts the perspective on the

West from outsider to insider. Clothing, baskets, pottery, carvings and weavings by Navajo, Pueblo and Hopi artists interpret daily life and traditions.

Katrina Nelson Thomas, director of the four Stark Art and History Venues in Orange, explains the Stark Museum's educational mission. "When students come, they see the work in the galleries, and then they make art inspired by something they see, so they always leave with a piece they made," she says. "We're trying to make that connection between the collection and the art that's made."



SHANGRI LA BOTANICAL GARDENS AND NATURE CENTER

ess than 2 miles from the museum, visitors can walk through Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center, named for the fictional Tibetan paradise described in the 1933 novel *Lost Horizon*. Shangri La is where Lutcher Stark cultivated azaleas and camellias in abundance and created a lake where he launched a houseboat for weekend escapes in the 1950s.

A cold winter devastated Shangri La's plants in 1958, and the gardens closed to the public. The land reverted to a wild state, but in 2008, the Stark Foundation reopened the restored gardens to the public. Shangri La now occupies 252 acres of gardens and wetlands, with an eco-boat tour and an egret rookery that includes a viewing blind where 50,000 visitors a year watch great egrets nest and raise their young.

"What Mr. Stark did was paint a picture with plants," says Jen-

nifer Buckner, Shangri La's director of horticulture. "We honor that and our connection to the museum with garden 'rooms.'" Each section combines plantings that demonstrate an artistic character of line, shape, texture, contrast and color. In the shape garden, rows of dwarf yaupon form perfectly rounded bushes. The contrasts garden showcases flowers and leaves exhibiting colors from opposite sides of the color wheel.

The gardens revived Lutcher Stark's original obsession with camellias and azaleas. Each spring, the flowers bloom along the shore of Pond of the Blue Moon. Miriam Lutcher Stark's original epiphyte house overflows with orchids,

WEB EXTRAS

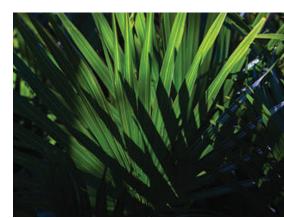
► Read online for a link to 600-plus artworks in Stark collections. Call or go online to confirm hours of operation.

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Clockwise from opposite page: The boardwalk above the cypress-tupelo swamp at Shangri La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center; bottle tree sculpture; dwarf palmetto; and Bowring's cattleya orchids.

bromeliads, ferns and lichens. Other areas include an edibles garden, a daylily collection and hanging gardens.

The majority of Shangri La's property lies along Adams Bayou and is most accessible via the boat tour. Elevated wooden walkways take visitors past the Nature Discovery Center toward the dock, which is surrounded by cattails, Texas saw hibiscus, rushes and lily pads as well as bald and pond cypress. "We even have some wild orchids that grow here," says Buckner, who always keeps an eye out for unique flora.

The property along the bayou preserves an untouched section of cypress-tupelo swamp, used as an outdoor classroom for local students. Kathleen Nelligan, an environmental educator, narrates a tour as the boat swings out onto the bayou. As guests motor quietly upriver, they catch sight of turtles sunning on logs or egrets and kingfishers taking flight above the water.

In one classroom, children learn about the swamp ecosystem firsthand. The classroom's A-frame structure rises out of the marsh

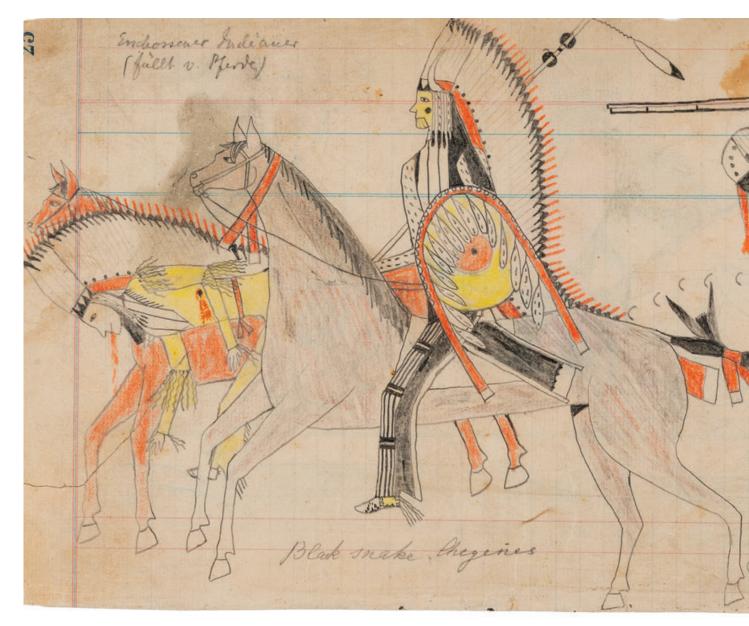
like a church, and rows of benches complete the look of a sanctuary.

"I really love teaching outside," says Nelligan. "The kids get out here and think, yay, we're out of school. But we are a school; we're just a school without walls."

Not far from the dock stands the Survivor Tree, a 1,200-yearold pond cypress that rises from the water near the edge of Shangri La. The species is not typically found in this area, but this tree was here long before Texas was a shape on the map.

"The story of the Lutcher-Starks is the story of the creation of the city of Orange," Cole explains. To convince his young wife to remain in Texas, W.H. Stark built an elaborate house to make her as comfortable as possible. "This area was always a borderland between empires, between countries, and was very lawless and underdeveloped."

Stark used the family wealth to pave streets, build churches and schools, and bring refinement to the burgeoning East Texas town. See more of **Julia Robinson**'s work at juliarobinsonphoto.com.



Cultural Accounting

19TH-CENTURY DRAWINGS OFFER INSIGHT INTO PLAINS PERSPECTIVE

BY CHARLES LOHRMANN

he nomadic tribes of North America's southern Plains, including the Kiowa, did not traditionally maintain a written history, so a Native American version of events from the mid-19th century is not easy to find.

One rare example can be seen in a series of 58 pencil drawings in the collection of the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin.

These drawings—many attributed to the Kiowa—were originally bound in an account ledger and dated 1840–1895. It is known as the Schild Ledger because it was purchased in 1895 by Dr. E.H. Tips in Fredericksburg from the estate of Herman Schild, believed to have been a member of the Board of Indian Commissioners.

"Because Kiowas had no written form of their language in

the 19th century, the ledgers are among the most important formats in which we can see things from their perspective," explains Jennifer Graber, associate director of the Native American and indigenous studies program at UT Austin. "The ledgers, with their emphasis on landscapes, community, animals, family life, significant life events and ritual, point us toward what was important to Kiowas."

Ledger art is widely known among students and collectors of 19th-century Native American art. As the name suggests, the drawings were made on paper in actual ledgers, and they are described as similar to paintings originally made on animal hides.

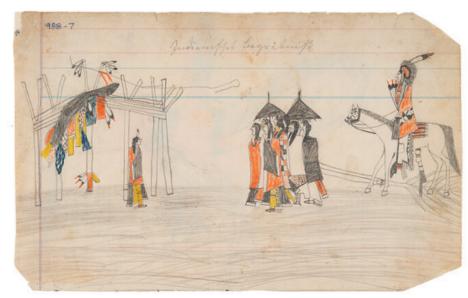
Graber points out that Kiowas changed artistic and historic media through the centuries the tribe lived on the Plains. Generations earlier, Graber says, the Plains people would have made carvings and paintings on rock. Later, these people painted on tepees and shields made from buffalo hides. "When paper

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became available, they used that too," she says.

Even though an artist with a notebook full of paper can create more complex images than on other media, Graber says that "throughout their history of artistic production, Kiowas evidenced many consistencies, including their depiction of important historical events and their encounters with supernatural powers."

Ledger art history suggests that the drawings continued a Plains artistic tradition of two-dimensional figures populating scenes of battles, ceremonies and native life. The artists capture the essence of the scene in a highly stylized way, including little shading to imply depth. Unique details in the drawings, such as shield designs, are useful for identifying the subjects by tribal affiliation or even by name.

WEB EXTRAS

Read this story online for more about ledger art.

The Schild Ledger was a well-traveled volume. After Tips purchased the ledger in 1895, he traveled with it to Germany, and his son, Carlos, ultimately returned with it to the United States. The Texas Memorial Museum acquired the ledger from Carlos Tips'

Clockwise from opposite page: Drawings from the Schild Ledger show a confrontation between two mounted warriors; two figures in elaborate dress; tribal members bringing boughs to a Sun Dance lodge.

widow in 1964.

When the museum deaccessioned its cultural artifacts to focus on natural history, the ledger moved to the Texas Archeological Research

Laboratory. In 2016, the ledger was transferred from TARL to the Blanton Museum of Art.

Jonathan Jarvis, associate director of TARL, describes the archaeological information these drawings communicate. In one example, a drawing depicts the 1874 Buffalo Wallow battle of the Red River War. "For us it is great art, and we recognize the history there, but we can relate it to actual, in-the-ground archaeology."

Jarvis helped facilitate the transfer of the Schild Ledger to the Blanton because the museum is better able to get the drawings out to the public. Now, the drawings are exhibited occasionally and preserved for further study by tribal members, artists, archaeologists, historians and anthropologists.

Charles Lohrmann is the editor of Texas Co-op Power.

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

DEAR DARRYL: My home is about 10 years old, and so is my septic system. I have always taken pride in keeping my home and property in top shape. In fact, my neighbors and I



are always kidding each other about who keeps their home and yard nicest. Lately, however, I have had a horrible smell in my yard, and also in one of my bathrooms, coming from the shower drain. My grass is muddy and all the drains in my home are very slow.

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

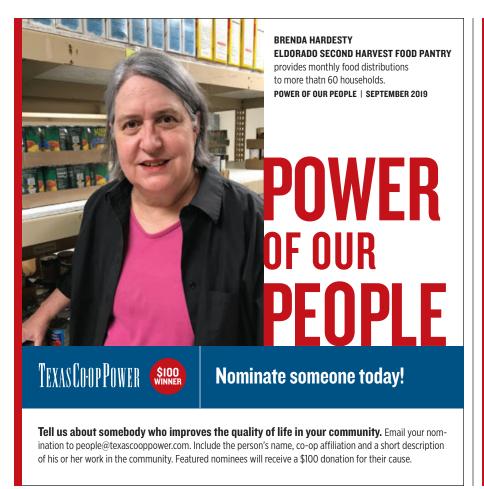
I tried the store bought, so called, Septic treatments out there, and they did Nothing to clear up my problem. Is there anything on the market I can pour or flush into my system that will restore it to normal, and keep it maintained?

Clogged and Smelly - Amarillo, TX

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

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This May, Take Time To Plug Into Safety



MESSAGE FROM
GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

THIS MONTH, I'D LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT ON THE

importance of safety. May is Electrical Safety Month, and CECA is dedicated to sharing safety tips and helping raise awareness about the dangers of electricity. We all depend on electricity to power our lives, but accidents can happen when power sources are improperly used.

Our Responsibility to You

CECA's concern for safety extends beyond our employees. We care deeply about the safety of our members, and this month, we encourage you to plug into safety. According to Electrical

Safety Foundation International, thousands of Americans are critically injured or killed annually as a result of electrical fires and accidents in their own homes.

To promote safety education in our local communities, we offer safety programs to area schools and community groups and regularly provide electrical safety content in these pages. We encourage you to contact us if you see a downed power line or any other dangerous electrical situation.

We strive to provide our communities with safe, reliable and affordable electricity and to serve as your trusted energy adviser, now and well into the future.

Our Responsibility to Our Employees

It is no accident that safety is a top priority among the employees of CECA. We are committed to a culture of safety that is integral to our daily operations.

Our lineworkers are required to wear personal protective equipment when on the job. This includes special fire-resistant clothing that will

self-extinguish, limiting potential injuries from burns and sparks. Insulated and rubber gloves are worn in tandem to protect from electrical shock.

Our employees—those in the field and in the office—regularly attend programs to enhance their safety awareness. Our lineworkers start each job with a tailgate meeting to discuss the project before them and how best to complete it safely.

As the general manager of CECA, I believe it is my duty and responsibility to raise awareness about the importance of electrical safety. That's why I encourage you to take a moment to plug into safety.



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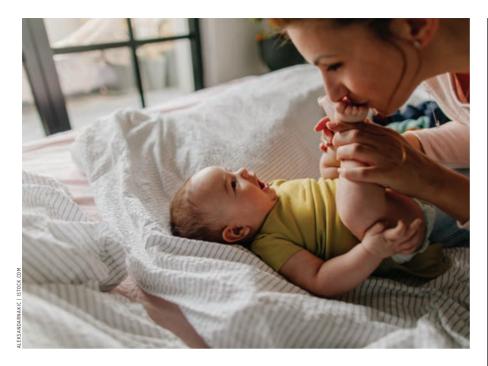
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WITH ALL THE CRAZY THINGS GOING ON IN OUR WORLD TODAY, AMERICANS ARE

spending more and more time inside their homes. Did you know that a home's age, installation issues, wear and tear, and overlooked safety devices could put you at risk.

Does your home have any of the following issues?

Insufficient or poorly maintained smoke detectors. Every year, more than 3,400 Americans die and more than 17,000 are injured in fires. Ensure your home is protected by installing smoke detectors on each level of your home near sleeping areas. Replace batteries annually at a minimum and test monthly for reliability. Replace smoke detectors every eight to 10 years. If yours are so old that no date is visible, new detectors are well past due.

No carbon monoxide monitors. Carbon monoxide poisoning is the No. 1 cause of poisoning deaths in the U.S. Why? CO is completely colorless and odorless and naturally produced as a byproduct of the operation of combustion appliances and heat sources. Installing CO detectors in your home is an important safety measure to protect you and your family. Install at least one detector near the sleeping area of your home; add more to each level of your home and one to each bedroom for extra protection. Replace old detectors every five to six years.

Unsafe electrical breaker box. Older models are insufficient for the array of gadgets and appliances in use in the average home today and can be easily overloaded. Improper wiring from do-it-yourselfers, oversized or undersized breakers, and panels deemed defective and unsafe for use (some installed as recently as the 1980s) could result in fire or shock. Have a licensed electrician update the panel to a newer model to prevent home safety issues.

Not meeting wiring safety codes. Wiring codes in the U.S. are updated every three years to ensure electrical safety across the country. As a result, families living in older homes are at an increased risk of electrical hazards due to ungrounded outlets, outdated or exposed wiring, and a lack of ground-fault circuit interrupters and childproof outlets.

Don't let home safety issues result in property damage or present a danger to your family. Find and address home hazards quickly and efficiently with a home electrical inspection.



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Hunting Topaz

The official state gem occurs naturally in Texas in just one county

BY BRENDA KISSKO

Frank Roberts has helped people from as far away as Belgium and France look for Texas' official state gem.

"There's something about finding a sparkly rock that's been in the ground for a billion years," says Roberts, a member of Pedernales Electric Cooperative, who guides guests to Central Texas on quests for Texas topaz. "Once they find it, they're hooked."

Texas blue topaz certainly stands out as a rare and prized stone. Mason County is the only county in Texas where the official state gem can be found, making it a frequent destination for visitors eager to pluck their very own from the ground.

The go-to guy in Mason for all things topaz is Warren Grote, proprietor of Mason Country Collectibles downtown and a member of Central Texas Electric Cooperative. He tells a story about one couple who walked into his store a few years back. They were on their first vacation in 21 years. They had stayed close to home because their son was born with Down syndrome and required extensive care. Grote explained how best to search for topaz and sent them on their way with all the tools they needed for a chance to find themselves a Texas gem.

Three ranches in Mason County offer public topaz hunting—Bar M Ranch, Lindsay Ranch and Seaquist Ranch. All require advance reservations. The Lindsay and Seaquist ranches are open mid-January through fall, and Bar M Ranch is open from February through September. Topaz hunting on the Lindsay Ranch is available only to overnight guests at its ranch

houses and campsites.

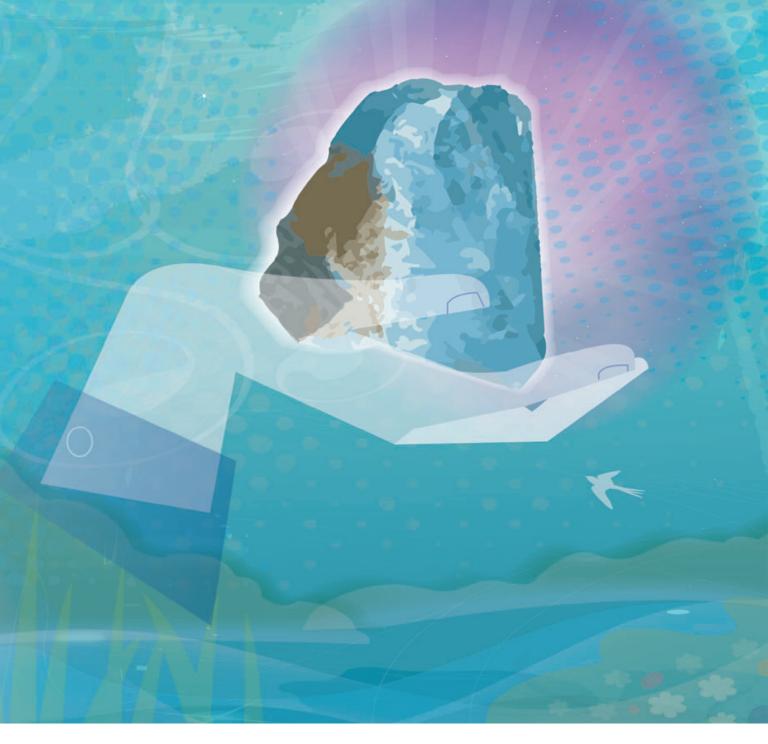
If you strike out after such a quest, there are several places in Mason that sell Texas blue topaz, which became the official state gem March 26, 1969, when Gov. Preston Smith signed House Concurrent Resolution No. 12 into law.

Topaz requires a lot of aluminum and growth from hot, fluorine-rich fluid near the end stages of granite crystallization, says Mark Helper, a senior lecturer in the University of Texas' geosciences school. The granite plutons in the Llano Uplift in Mason County are the only masses known to bear topaz in Texas.

Topaz naturally occurs in many colors, including yellow, pink and brown. Pure topaz is colorless; chemical impurities give it its color. A natural blue topaz—one of the rarer colors—is caused by imperfections in the arrangement of its atoms. Some of the brighter blue topaz is obtained by irradiating colorless topaz, making it an accessible and popular variety. Most of the topaz found in Mason County is colorless or light blue. Topaz is found in other states and on every continent. Brazil is the largest producer.

The best time to hunt for topaz is after a good rain, when the ground is soft and the creek beds are stirred up. Look for it around granite outcroppings and near creeks. Your ranch hosts will direct you to the best spots on their property. You'll need a small shovel and a fine screen for sifting. Gloves, sunscreen, closed-toe shoes and a hat are recommended. These are working ranches, so be mindful to leave the land how you find it, including filling in any





holes that you dig. Do not enter private property without the owner's permission.

To learn more about topaz, head to the Mason Square Museum, where you'll see the largest known light blue topaz discovered in North America, found in Mason County in 1904 by Albert McGehee. It's said that McGehee used the 6,480-carat crystal as a doorstop before the Smithsonian Institution bought it from him for \$75 in 1913. It's now at the museum on loan from the Smithsonian, along with several other pieces of topaz.

When you're ready to buy, Country Collectibles sells raw and cut gems in a variety of sizes and shades. Many are faceted in

the Lone Star cut, the official state gemstone cut. Check out Grote's 587.15-carat light blue topaz, named the Grand Azure.

Grote finishes his story about the couple that stepped into his store many moons ago. They sent him a postcard when they returned home. On their quest, they discovered a large piece of topaz as well as a translucent arrowhead thought to be made out of quartz circa 9000 B.C.

"That's my all-time favorite story," Grote says. He told them, "God's rewarding you for your faithfulness to your son."

Brenda Kissko writes about nature, travel and our relationship with land. Read more of her work at brendakissko.com.

An Outsize Legacy

Remembering Daddy-O Wade and his eye-catching art

BY LONN TAYLOR

Editor's Note: The late historian and author Lonn Taylor profiled Texas characters for his weekly Rambling Boy column in *The Big Bend Sentinel*. This look at artist Bob Wade from 2018 is one of them. We offer it as a remembrance of Wade, who died December 24, 2019.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, MY WIFE AND I WERE enjoying dinner at Marfa's Blue Javelina when a cacophony of sirens and gunshots erupted outside on U.S. Highway 90. A battered sedan came by at 90 miles an hour, followed by four Border Patrol vehicles and a sheriff's car with lawmen leaning out of the windows shooting at the sedan. We were witnessing a narcotics chase, which ended on the east side of town when a bullet went through the sedan's rear window and the 17-year-old *narcotraficante* pulled over and gave up. His bullet-riddled sedan sat on the shoulder of the highway for several days.

That is why I did not give a second thought to the bullet-riddled yellow Chevrolet step van that appeared in the parking lot of Marfa's Lost Horse Saloon not long after. I assumed it was the relic of another narcotics chase. So I was taken by surprise when artist Bob Wade called and asked if I would write about his shotup Bonnie and Clyde Mobile that was on display in Marfa. I went back for another look and, sure enough, in red paint under the windshield it said, "Bonnie and Clyde Mobile © BobWade.com 1982." It needs a larger label.

Wade told me that he bought the vehicle in Dallas in 1982 to drive in a Mardi Gras art car parade. He had it painted school-bus yellow so the bullet holes would show up, and then took it to a shooting range in Garland and paid the owner to pepper it with machine gun fire. In the parade, he tossed plastic toy soldiers to the crowd and was soundly booed; the crowd evidently felt that the van was not in the Mardi Gras spirit.

Wade, who was known by the nickname "Daddy-O," is a native Texan, born in 1943. For 40 years, he has adorned the Texas landscape with giant sculptures incor-

porating iconic Texas symbols. His best-known work is probably the 35-foot-high cowboy boots he created in 1979 for the Washington Project for the Arts, which were initially displayed in a public art space three blocks from the White House. They are now at North Star Mall in San Antonio, where at Christmas they are lit by 8,000 red and white LED lights. In 2015 they were recognized by the *Guinness Book of World Records* as the world's largest cowboy boots.

Wade has also built a 40-foot-long wire-and-polyurethane iguana named Iggy, which is now at the Fort Worth Zoo, and a set of six 10-foot-high dancing musical frogs. The frogs were originally made for a Dallas night club called Tango and were christened *Six Frogs Over*





WEB EXTRAS

► Read The Curious Creations of Daddy-O Wade on our website. Tango because the club was owned by Shannon Wynne, whose father owned Six Flags Over Texas. The frogs lived brief-

ly atop Carl's Corner, on Interstate 35 [in the HILCO Electric Cooperative service area].

Wade also developed a process for digitizing Western photos from old postcards and enlarging them onto canvas, which he then airbrushed with transparent layers of acrylic paint, producing the effect of giant hand-tinted photographs. His cowgirls, Mexican revolutionaries and rodeo performers are in permanent collections all over the country, and his enlarged and colored photograph of Buffalo Bill Cody and Prince Albert I of Monaco hangs in

the royal palace in Monte Carlo.

Wade first came to my attention in the mid-1970s, when some friends in Denton told me about him supervising a master's thesis that involved a student named Andy Sheehan tattooing Harley-Davidson wings on a pig.

The tattooed pig did not exactly establish Wade's (or Sheehan's) reputation as an artist, but in 1979 Wade was invited to enter a piece in the prestigious Paris Biennale. He submitted *Texas Mobile Home Museum*, a 1947 Spartan trailer coach filled with Texas oddities, including a taxidermied bucking bronco, a two-headed calf, a stuffed armadillo and sets of longhorns. This was the second year of the *Dallas* TV series, and the French were crazy about anything from Texas; the trailer was a huge

hit, and Wade's artistic future was secured.

It is appropriate that the Bonnie and Clyde Mobile ended up in Marfa because Wade lived there when he was in the fourth grade and his father was the manager of the Paisano Hotel. This was long before Donald Judd came to Marfa, so Wade said he was the first contemporary artist to live in Marfa.

When I was talking to Wade about the Bonnie and Clyde Mobile, I asked him how he was able to resist squeezing off a few rounds himself when he was having the step van shot up. He lowered his voice on the phone and said, "You know, I'm a real Texas guy and all that, but I've never felt comfortable around loaded guns."

I've always known Daddy-O is a softie at heart.

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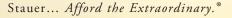
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Horses' Roundabout Trail

How today's noble steeds follow in the footsteps of their prehistoric ancestors

BY MARTHA DEERINGER

MUCH OF THE MODERN HISTORY OF TEXAS was built on the backs of horses, but where did these equine partners in the settlement of the state originate? The fossil record of the genus Equus, according to Live Science, can be traced back some 4 million years in North America.

The predecessors of modern horses spread from North America, probably over the Bering land bridge that once connected Alaska and Siberia, and colonized Asia, Europe and Africa. The last of those prehistoric horses in North America died out 11,000–13,000 years ago, the result of a cooling event that also wiped out woolly mammoths, American camels and other animals.

The Americas remained horseless until Christopher Columbus arrived on his second voyage, in 1493, and introduced domesticated horses to Hispaniola and Cuba. The return of horses to the Western Hemisphere was no small feat. Records from early voyages tell of numerous deaths among valuable horses, which crossed the stormy Atlantic suspended in slings in damp, dark holds to prevent the rolling of the ship from tossing them about.

If the storms didn't get them, the calm winds of the "horse latitudes" might. In this region, about 30 degrees north and 30 degrees south of the equator, ships sailing to the Western Hemisphere from Europe and Asia often became stalled,



sometimes for weeks. If a ship carried horses and the supply of fresh water crept below a critical point, sailors would sometimes be forced to throw horses overboard—earning this region its name.

In 1519, Hernando Cortés landed in what is now Veracruz, where horses left hoofprints on the North American mainland for the first time in more than 10,000 years. Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who accompanied Cortés, explained, "The natives had never seen horses up to this time and thought the horse and rider were all one animal."

That same year, Francisco Vázquez de Coronado sailed to North America with 150 horses, followed in 1539 by Hernando de Soto with 237. Eventually, some of the wily beasts emancipated themselves and set up housekeeping on the Great Plains, helped in their expansion by the development of Spanish missions, which kept herds of horses. Some were traded with Native Americans, who learned to ride like the centaurs that had so astonished

them when the Spanish arrived.

The first horses brought to Texas arrived in 1542 with the Moscoso expedition, named for Luis de Moscoso Alvarado, who took charge of the 600-man expedition when de Soto died of fever near the Mississippi River. These original Spanish mustangs were the foundation for later American breeds, including the fabled quarter horse, whose endurance and talent for handling cattle made it the horse of choice for frontiersmen and ranchers in early Texas.

Today, there are an estimated 880,000 horses in Texas, according to Texas A&M University. Artist Frederic Remington paid tribute to the noble animal when he remarked, "Of all the monuments which the Spaniard has left to glorify his reign in America, there will be none more worthy than his horse."

Martha Deeringer, a Heart of Texas EC member, lives in McGregor. Read more of her work at marthadeeringer.com.



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Spring Celebrations

SPRING IS USUALLY A TIME FOR CELEBRATIONS, including graduations and bridal showers. Of course, gatherings have been on hold and social distancing is in place because of COVID-19. So save these recipes for when we're able to join together and celebrate joyous occasions.

Whenever I go to a party, or host one of my own, I try to bring something that everyone will enjoy. Often I share dishes that are on the healthier side to balance out a buffet spread. I know guests are grateful when only crumbs remain.

This take on a popular dip is portable. You can make the dip in advance and bake the cups just before party time, ensuring they're warm and crisp for serving.

MEGAN MYERS. FOOD EDITOR

Spinach Artichoke **Wonton Cups**

- 24 wonton wrappers
- package (10 ounces) frozen spinach, thawed and drained
- jar (7.5 ounces) marinated artichoke hearts, drained and finely chopped
- cup sour cream
- ounces cream cheese, softened
- cup grated Parmesan cheese
- cloves garlic, minced or pressed
- teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Arrange the wonton wrappers in two 12-cup muffin pans, then coat lightly with nonstick spray. Bake the wonton cups for 5 minutes, then remove from oven and set aside.
- 2. In a medium bowl, stir together spinach, artichoke hearts, sour cream, cream cheese, Parmesan, garlic and pepper until thoroughly combined.
- 3. Divide mixture evenly among the wonton cups. Bake 10-12 minutes until warmed and wonton cups are golden. ▶ Makes 24.

COOK'S TIP This recipe uses a standard muffin tin, but you can also use a minimuffin tin to make the cups bite-size.

Follow along with Megan Myers and her adventures in the kitchen at stetted.com.

Recipes

Spring Celebrations

THIS MONTH'S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

MILLIE KIRCHOFF | NUECES EC

Banana bars are a hit with kids of all ages. Topped with cream cheese icing, this recipe is baked in a sheet pan, ensuring plenty for eager hands. Kirchoff suggests topping the bars with pecan halves or decorative sprinkles

for an extra-festive touch.

Banana Bars

BARS

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs, room temperature
- 2 cups mashed ripe banana (about 4 large bananas)
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ½ teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves

Pinch of salt

FROSTING

- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 4 cups powdered sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract

- 1. BARS: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease an 18-by-13-inch rimmed baking sheet with butter or nonstick spray and set aside.
- 2. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in eggs one at a time until just incorporated, then stir in banana and vanilla.
- **3.** In another bowl, combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, cloves and salt, then add to banana mixture and mix well.
- **4.** Pour onto prepared baking sheet and bake 20 minutes or until it springs back slightly when touched in the center. Cool completely.
- **5. FROSTING:** While bars cool, mix together butter, cream cheese, powdered sugar and vanilla until smooth. Spread over cooled banana bars. Cover and chill at least 1 hour.
- ► Makes 3 dozen bars.

Soy Brown Sugar-Glazed Salmon

CASSANDRA HUNTER | PEDERNALES EC

This easy yet flavorful salmon dish is excellent for a spring dinner party. "Every time I make this salmon for a special occasion, I have had numerous guests asking me for the recipe," Hunter says. For ease of serving, cut the salmon into individual portions before baking, keeping in mind that cook time may be reduced.

- √2 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 2 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 pounds center-cut salmon
- 1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees. In a mixing bowl, whisk together brown sugar, soy sauce, rice vinegar, ginger and garlic. Set aside.
- 2. Place salmon skin-side down on a rimmed baking sheet lined with foil. With a small knife, cut ½-inch slits about 1 inch apart across the top of the salmon. Brush the salmon generously with the glaze, reserving the rest. Allow the mixture to seep into the slits.
- **3.** Bake salmon 10 minutes, then baste again with remaining glaze. Return to oven for 5 minutes more, until a baking thermometer inserted in the salmon's center reads 145 degrees. Let salmon rest 5 minutes and serve. ▶ Serves 8.

Grandma Jewel's Italian Cream Cake

KAITLYN WILLINGHAM | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

This popular cake is often served at birthday parties and other celebrations. This version features nuts in the frosting, but Willingham also loves to incorporate pecans within the cake. For those who enjoy more coconut, press extra coconut flakes to the frosting while it is still tacky.

CAKE

- 2 cups sugar
- ½ cup shortening
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 5 eggs, separated
- 2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup sweetened flaked coconut



FROSTING

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, softened
- 3½ cups powdered sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- **1. CAKE**: Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease 2 round 9-inch cake pans.
- **2.** In a large bowl, cream sugar, shortening and butter. Add egg yolks one at a time.
- **3.** In a small bowl, whisk together flour and baking soda. Add the flour mixture to the large bowl alternately with the buttermilk and vanilla.
- **4.** In a separate bowl, beat egg whites until stiff. Fold into batter until no streaks remain, then stir in coconut.
- **5.** Divide batter between cake pans and bake 25–30 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cool in pans 5 minutes, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
- 6. FROSTING: Combine cream cheese and butter. Using an electric mixer, beat in powdered sugar until smooth, taking care to increase speed slowly. Add vanilla and pecans. Place one cake layer on serving plate and top with 1/4 of the frosting, spreading evenly to edges. Top with second layer of cake and spread remaining frosting on top and sides. ▶ Serves 12.

WEB EXTRAS ► Find more than 800 recipes in our online archive, including this winning punch from November 2015.

Almond Punch

DEBBIE SUGAREK | BLUEBONNET EC

2½ cups sugar

- 3 quarts water
- 1 can (46 ounces) pineapple juice

 Juice of 3 lemons (approximately ³/₄ cup)
- 3 teaspoons almond extract
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- **1.** Combine sugar and water in a large pitcher and stir until sugar is completely dissolved.
- **2.** Add pineapple juice, lemon juice, and almond and vanilla extracts. Stir to blend.
- 3. Refrigerate 24 hours. Serve cold.
- ► Serves 24.







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Fairs and Carnivals

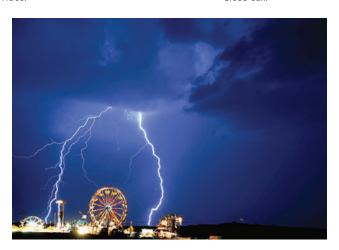
Take a stroll down the midway with us. Enjoy the rides and breathe in the intoxicating aroma of deep-fried everything. ${\bf GRACE}$ Fultz

WEB EXTRAS ► See Focus on Texas on our website for more photos from readers.



▲ RACHELLE GLENN, Guadalupe Valley EC: "Aurora and Will at the Come and Take It Carnival 2019 on one of their favorite rides."

▼ TSO DAVIS, United Cooperative Services: "Close call."





▲ ANGIE BIRMINGHAM, Nueces EC: "The Galveston Pleasure Pier is a year-round carnival."

▼ CHAD PRAHL, CoServ: "It's not a fair without some cotton candy."



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AROUND TEXAS ► TCP's monthly list of local events has been suspended due to COVID-19 cancellations. Always call or check an event's website for details.

◀ THERESA MCKEE, Fannin County EC: "The icon of the Texas State Fair, Big Tex, after the fatal fire. Now he has a slightly new look."





▲ REBECCA WARREN, Heart of Texas EC: "Riot of color offered blessed shade for one patio in the September heat of the State Fair of Texas."



▲ PAUL LAUDER, Farmers EC: "The pig and her handler catch up on badly needed sleep after the competition."

▼ PATRICIA STEHLING, Central Texas EC: Rainbow Ferris wheel.

UPCOMING CONTESTS

SEPTEMBER SHAPES	DUE MAY 10
OCTOBER SELFIES	DUE JUNE 10
NOVEMBER EXTREMES	DUE JULY 10

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Spirits of Seguin

Historic Magnolia Hotel features encounters with the supernatural

I'D HEARD THAT SEGUIN'S MAGNOLIA Hotel is one ghostly getaway where eerie encounters are a nightly occurrence, so I decided to see for myself. A block east of the Guadalupe County Courthouse, I found the boxy, two-story frame building and learned that its history dates to the mid-1800s.

Texas Ranger James Campbell built a log cabin on the site in 1840, and Ranger Jack Coffee Hays married the owner's daughter there in 1847. The hotel itself was built in 1853, and current owners Erin and Jim Ghedi saved it from abandonment after it was named to advocacy group Preservation Texas' 2012 Most Endangered Places list.

Erin Ghedi had taken my tour reservation and met me at the door. Knowing she voluntarily lives in a haunted hotel, I was surprised when she greeted me with a calming smile. My first brush with the unexpected occurred on the first floor, which felt anything but haunted: I encountered a warm and welcoming home with bright lighting and antiques in every corner.

The tour started in the front living room, which was decorated with frontier memorabilia and a large portrait of Campbell, the supposed lingering occupant. Ghedi described how guests catch the scent of Campbell's burning cigars or hear his boots walking across the wooden floor. Almost on cue, the rocking chair in the corner moved back and forth. "Oh, and he likes to do that too," Ghedi said.

As we moved from room to room, Ghedi told stories of the 13 ghosts that inhabit the building. In the kitchen, guests encounter the 1850s owner and her chil-



Jim and Erin Ghedi with Chet. dren. Near the back fireplace, a person who had been en-

slaved blows out candles. To convince skeptics, Ghedi supports each story with photographs from guests and a binder full of historical research.

Upstairs, the Ghedis have transformed a portion of the second floor into an Airbnb rental, while the rest remains the same as when they bought it. Before we entered the dark rooms, Ghedi paused and said, "Remember, the ghosts cannot hurt you. While you may feel them touch you and you may feel scared, they cannot hurt you." I had never been touched by a ghost and was not sure I wanted to start now.

Ghedi handed me a flashlight and a device with blinking lights to signify when spirits were present. Then she led me into the darkness. My flashlight beam illuminated walls with crumbling wallboard and bathrooms full of broken tiles and fixtures. Even in daylight, this place would be super creepy. Suddenly, the overwhelming scent of rose perfume filled the air. Ghedi spoke:

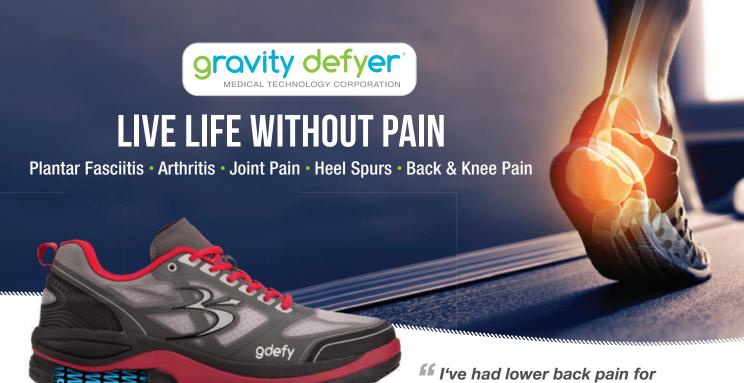
"Oh, Rosebud is excited that a gentleman is visiting. She was a madam here for many years." I didn't believe my nose and even accused Ghedi of spraying the room with rose scent. She swore she had not.

Ghedi believes all the ghosts are voluntarily present and can leave at any time—all except one, known as the Murderer, who is trapped in an upstairs bedroom. I walked into the room and experienced an overwhelmingly heavy feeling. I decided to walk out before I learned more about this spirit.

I'm certainly a skeptic when it comes to haunted places, but I've got no explanation for the things that happened on my tour. I do know that if you're looking for a rendezvous with the strange, the spooky and the unexpected, you need to check into this historic hotel that's so fascinating some guests never check out.

Chet Garner shares his Texplorations as the host of *The Daytripper* on PBS.

WEB EXTRAS ➤ Read this story on our website to see Chet's video of Seguin's Magnolia Hotel. Call or go online to plan a visit.



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