Adventures along the Goodnight Loving Trail
This year’s Texas Silver Round features the geographic outline of the State of Texas and the world-famous Texas Star. The reverse features a stunning whitetail buck hidden in the Texas brush, a beautiful, hand sculpted design by acclaimed designer Heidi Wastweet. These one troy ounce silver rounds are 99.99% pure. This is the silver you’ve been hunting for!

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The town of Goodnight sprang up from this settlement after Charles Goodnight and wife Molly moved here in 1887.

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**NEXT MONTH**

Wildflowers! It’s hard work being a native—invasives are everywhere. Plus best-bet wildflower drives and tips for how to make your own meadow.

**ON THE COVER**  This bison, a descendant of Charles Goodnight’s famous herd, roams Caprock Canyons State Park.  Photo by Julia Robinson

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Long Live the Flatlanders
I enjoyed the brilliant article about an extraordinary group (“The Flatlanders: Now It’s Now Again,” December 2014). I saw them perform several times, at the Galveston Mardi Gras and at the Houston International Festival. Relates in Germany first raved about them. I am playing “One Endless Night” right now.

URSULA SLUS | ROCKPORT NUECES EC

The Story of Bad Santa Gets Worse
Your story of the Santa Claus Bandit (“Bad Santa,” December 2014) is one that I heard over and over again growing up. My late father, Jim Clements, who would have been 99 on December 4, witnessed the lynching of Marshall Ratliff in Eastland when he was 14.

After riding with his older sister from Cleburne to shop in Eastland that day, they were caught up in the crowd frenzy. He told the story just like it happened. After the first rope broke, he remembered them holding Ratliff while someone ran into the hardware store for another rope.

There are other aspects of the crowd that are definitely too graphic to print. I heard this story long, long before I ever heard anything about the Santa Claus Bandit outside my own home.

D. MARTINEZ | BASTROP COUNTY BLUEBONNET EC

Plan of San Diego
Thank you for the excellent history article on the Plan of San Diego (“Plan of San Diego Uprising,” January 2015).

MICHAEL DAVIS | BAYTOWN MEDINA EC

Briscoe Center for American History
I was so delighted when I opened the December 2014 issue of Texas Co-op Power and there, on Page 3, with the table of contents, was a picture of some of my grandfather’s wood carvings. He was O.W.H. Giese (1872–1960), who resided in Washington County. Upon his death, his daughter, my Aunt Myra Giese Brandt, donated a number of his wood carvings to the Winedale Museum, which is now part of the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History.

Thank you for sharing this with all the members of the electric co-ops.

DIANA GIESE RHODES | NURSERY | VICTORIA EC

Readers may like to know that movement is still alive and well in several organizations, including the National Council of La Raza (NCLR) and the Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan (M.E.Ch.A.).

D. MARTINEZ | BASTROP COUNTY BLUEBONNET EC

Sam Rayburn’s Desk
The article about Sam Rayburn and John Nance Garner was really enjoyable (“Cooperative Legislative Legends,” December 2014). I especially liked seeing the replica of Sam Rayburn’s office in Washington, D.C.

I taught theater arts at Sam Rayburn High School in Pasadena and am glad to report that Sam Rayburn’s desk from Washington is on display in the main office of that school [at left], along with a photograph of “Mr. Sam.”

No one seems to know exactly how it came to be in the Pasadena school, only that the desk was donated from his Washington Office to the school when it opened in 1964.

JANICE LEVI | GROESBECK NAVASOTA VALLEY EC

Incandescents vs. CFLs
Everyone these days seems to be talking of saving energy, which I guess is a good thing. However, your “Six Easy Ways Kids Can Help Save Energy” in the January 2015 issue recommends changing light-bulbs to CFLs or LEDs.

How can kids afford these high-dollar bulbs? I can, but I generally refuse to pay that much for a bulb that I find does not last any longer than an old-fashioned one.

I have CFLs in my home office and have changed them twice in the year and a half we’ve been in our home. That does not seem to be a savings for the consumer (me!).

Sorry, but if given a choice, I’ll stick with the old incandescents and change them every six months or so.

DON DIEU | LUBBOCK SOUTH PLAINS EC

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Texas Co-op Power Magazine
HAPPENINGS

Beasts of Burden

Visitors to Barrington Living History Farm can discover where the term “horsepower” originated with demonstrations March 28–29 featuring horses, mules and oxen trained to do farmwork. These livestock played a vital role in the operations of early Texas farms by pulling plows, harrowing fields, hauling cotton or cultivating corn.

Many of us come from families that, generations ago, relied on draft animals for their livelihoods, says Jonathan Failor, the park ranger at Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park who started the Beasts of Burden weekend two years ago. “Farming is something that lives in all of us,” he says.

The Texas Draft Horse and Mule Association joins with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in putting animals to work in a small cotton patch at Barrington farm, which is adjacent to the state park and was the home of Anson Jones, the last president of the Republic of Texas.

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ENERGY NEWS

Energy Spending Takes Less Out of Our Wallets

Consumer energy expenditures as a percent of disposable income were lower in 2013 than the average since 1960, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.

Energy expenditures have averaged between 4 and 8 percent of disposable income since 1960, for a 5.5 percent total average. Expenditures accounted for slightly more than 5 percent in 2013.

Because electricity and transportation spending accounts for more than two-thirds of consumer energy expenditures, increasing vehicle fuel efficiencies and changing fuels used for home heating have contributed to lower consumer energy expenditures relative to disposable income.
The State Steed

The American Quarter Horse Association (aqha.com) turns 75 this month. The breed traces its origins to the original sire named Steel Dust [“Where Quarter Horses Get Their Mettle,” October 2014], who came to Texas from Kentucky in 1844.

“For it was in Texas that the western range cattle industry had its origins, and it was the quarter horse that took farm boys out of cotton patches, made them into cowboys and carried them up the longhorn trails into history,” the association describes on its website.

A group of influential ranchers formed the AQHA in March 1940 when they gathered in Fort Worth for the annual Fat Stock Show. The association has registered more than 5 million horses since its inception.

The American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame & Museum in Amarillo showcases the people and horses influential in the breed’s history.

Hug a Peanut Farmer—Even if You’re Allergic

March is National Peanut Month, when the spotlight shines on Texas peanut farmers and the 433 million pounds of nuts they grow.

Think Americans aren’t nuts about this product (which is technically a legume)? The amount of peanut butter eaten in a year could wrap the earth in a ribbon of 18-ounce peanut butter jars 1 1/3 times, according to the National Peanut Board.

But for people who are allergic to peanuts and peanut products—0.6 percent of Americans, according to the National Institutes of Health—peanut farmers in Texas and nationally have committed more than $10 million to food allergy research. The Texas Peanut Producers Board also has announced the launch of PeanutAllergyFacts.org, a website for schools and parents that offers science-based information about peanut and food allergies, and links to resources about effective allergy treatments.

Texas is the fourth-largest peanut-producing state in the country, and the industry is worth more than $1 billion to the state’s economy, according to the Texas Peanut Producers Board.

INNOVATION

Texas Tech Tweaks Turbine

New radar technology could help provide measurements of complex airflow conditions among wind turbines. The U.S. Department of Energy granted $1.4 million to researchers at Texas Tech University to develop the technology to increase wind energy output.

John Schroeder, a professor of atmospheric sciences and principal investigator for the project, said existing wind farms are not performing as expected.

“Wind farms are not putting out as much power as we would expect from them,” Schroeder said. “With a better understanding of how turbines interact with each other, we may be able to make small adjustments that could be worth millions of dollars.”

The research is expected to last for 18 months in Lubbock, home of South Plains Electric Cooperative.

Texas is the national leader in wind energy with 12,755 megawatts of installed capacity, 7,986 wind turbines—mostly in the Panhandle Plains—and as many as 9,000 jobs in the industry, according to the American Wind Energy Association.

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TEXAS TECH TWEAKS TURBINE

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THE GOODNIGHT LOVING
NE OF TEXAS’ LEGENDARY FIGURES grew up with the state. Charles Goodnight was born March 5, 1836, in Macoupin County, Illinois, just three days after Texas achieved independence. Goodnight came to Texas riding bareback into Milam County, 30 miles northwest of present-day College Station, in late 1845, the year Texas joined the Union. Goodnight was proud of those dates, and some biographers suggest it was this close chronological identity that inspired him to lead a life that followed such a sweeping arc across the Lone Star State.

Goodnight made history for his gutsy cattle drive with partner Oliver Loving. The two blazed a new trail to lucrative markets in the west through hostile Indian territory. The tale is familiar to fans of Larry McMurtry’s epic novel “Lonesome Dove” and the star-studded miniseries borne from the book, but even without the embellishment of Hollywood, the real story describes an epic journey. Today’s history buffs can follow Goodnight’s trail through Texas, beginning where he did, in the tiny town of Oran.

Goodnight was still a young man of 30 when the Civil War ended. After serving as a scout for the Texas Rangers and as part of the Confederate frontier defense, he returned to the rough country of north-central Texas to find that uncontrolled cattle rustling had left untamed herds roaming the landscape. Goodnight was devastated and saw little cause for hope.

But that hopelessness and desperation spawned a daring idea. Popular trail drive logic directed cattlemen to aim for northern markets at trailheads in Kansas and elsewhere by following proven routes such as the Chisholm Trail. Knowing that with risk comes the promise of greater reward, Goodnight turned his sights west, betting on the underserved markets of New Mexico and Colorado. For this unprecedented plan to succeed, he would have to navigate the edge of the Comanche-controlled regions of the Panhandle and drive the cattle first south and then west for three days across the dry and featureless Llano Estacado.

As the upstart Goodnight prepared for the never-before-attempted drive in spring 1866, he traveled to nearby Weatherford and met up with Loving, an established cattleman almost a full generation older, who was then gathering his own herd for a drive. Goodnight recalled the chivalrous tone of that meeting at Black Springs, present-day Oran, years later.

Two historical markers acknowledge that historic Goodnight-Loving partnership in Oran. A thriving trade center in cattle-drive days, Oran today seems an unlikely spot for the genesis of any historic undertaking: Only a clutch of battered buildings and down-at-the-heels houses define the town now.
On the eastern edge of the Keechi Valley, FM 52 traverses hilly prairies interspersed with mottes of oak.

As the legend goes, Goodnight and Loving combined herds a few miles southwest of Fort Belknap on the western banks of the Brazos River. In early June 1866, they moved southwest with a herd estimated at 2,000 head managed by fewer than two dozen men and followed by a surplus Army wagon that Goodnight designed to serve as the outfit’s chuck wagon. Today, the Texas Historical Commission’s Texas Forts Trail follows the early sections of the original Goodnight-Loving Trail, marking a path southwest toward San Angelo.

Goodnight’s biggest gamble came west of San Angelo. The hands led the cattle to the Middle Concho River, where man and beast consumed as much water as possible in preparation for a near-100-mile trek across a barren and arid plain that would last three days and nights.

After that grueling, waterless drive, the herd stampeded for the Pecos River. The ensuing crush to relieve their torrid thirst created bedlam for cowboys, horses and cattle: A hundred head were lost.

Despite these losses, Goodnight and Loving pushed on north to Fort Sumner, New Mexico, where the U.S. Army bought much of the herd. Loving managed to guide the remaining cattle on to Colorado, while Goodnight returned to Texas carrying a relative fortune in gold with dreams of even greater rewards.

In 1867, in the course of the partners’ final drive, Loving made plans to travel ahead of the herd. He was wounded in an attack in New Mexico, just north of today’s state line, and succumbed to his wounds not long after.

Goodnight not only continued to pay Loving’s heirs his share of the business proceeds after Loving’s death but also promised to return Loving’s body to Texas. It wasn’t long before Loving returned home to Weatherford. An iron fence surrounds Loving’s grave on a hill in the Greenwood Cemetery overlooking the picturesque downtown neighborhood and the Parker County courthouse.

Goodnight continued ranching, working his cattle in the arid Llano Estacado country. He founded the JA Ranch with Englishman John Adair and established his own herds in Palo Duro Canyon. A replica of the one-room dugout he burrowed into the red clay earth of the canyon walls and roofed with cedar and cottonwood logs is open to tourists in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. Visitors to the “The Grand Canyon of Texas” can hike among colorful sandstone formations that Goodnight considered “nature’s fencing,” as it kept his cattle from wandering in those early days of Texas ranching.
As the American bison numbers dwindled in the late 1800s, Goodnight’s wife, Molly, encouraged him to save several orphan calves. In doing this, Goodnight established one of the five buffalo herds remaining in North America today. Descendants of this herd became the official Texas State Bison Herd in 1996 and now roam freely on 10,000 acres in Caprock Canyon State Park. Driving that park’s scenic loop, visitors can encounter buffalo bulls nibbling grass at the road’s edge and witness new calves testing their legs.

The Goodnights built their homestead north of Palo Duro Canyon and founded the town of Goodnight. The home was restored and opened to the public as the Charles Goodnight Historical Center in 2013. The two-story Victorian house, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, sits just south of U.S. 287, 40 miles east of Amarillo.

With the Goodnight house as the center of an imaginary compass, Goodnight’s legacy appears today to reach in every direction: To the east, his humble beginnings in the Keechi Valley. To the west, traces of the Goodnight-Loving Trail. To the north, the almost-deserted town of Goodnight that he founded in 1887. A historical marker on Ranch Road 294, just past Juliet-John Road, marks the site where Charles and Molly established the Goodnight College in 1898, a coed academy for the children of settlers and ranch hands. To the south, the JA Ranch, one of the most renowned ranching operations in the Texas Panhandle.

Late in life, Goodnight became known for his abrupt manner and quick temper. Even so, he remained active in ranching and civic life. He is credited with Armstrong County’s first wheat crop, among other agricultural experiments. He also developed a friendship with Quanah Parker, one of the last Comanche chiefs.

Goodnight died early on a December morning in 1929. His remains now lie next to Molly’s in the cemetery in Goodnight. The cemetery occupies a slight elevation, just a short, 2-mile ride from the Goodnight homestead and north of U.S. 287. Dozens of handkerchiefs tied to the fence flutter in the breeze, paying silent homage to a man who grew up with Texas and was one of the last cowmen to experience the open frontier.

Julia Robinson is an Austin photojournalist.

WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com View a slideshow with more photos.
In the summer of 1995, when I was in the early stages of my long love affair with the Texas barbecue scene, I lucked into an assignment to photograph small-town barbecue joints throughout Central Texas. The locations on my shot list included Llano, Lockhart, Taylor, Smithville and La Grange. My destination in La Grange was Prause Meat Market, situated on the historic courthouse square. As I walked through the door, I was surprised to see a place unlike any of the other spots I’d visited.

Prause was then and is now primarily a meat market. Prussian-born Arnold Prause (pronounced PROW-zee) established the family’s first butcher shop in 1904 on the north side of the square. The Prauses’ business eventually outgrew the original location, and they moved it south in 1953 to the current space. The market is owned and operated for now by fourth-generation members of the Prause family.

What I saw in Prause on that first visit nearly 20 years ago took me back to my youth in Amarillo, working in the family grocery store, Central Grocery, the heart of which was our meat market. Prause’s beautiful glass-fronted, refrigerated display cases were filled with carefully prepared cuts of beef and pork. The massive meat block was worn down from years—and tons—of meat trimming. The battered cutlery, the sawdust on the floor and the friendly, helpful folks behind the cases all reminded me of familiar images from my past.

As my education about and interaction with the Texas barbecue world grew, so did my appreciation of Prause Meat Market. It is a living reminder of the origins of our state’s barbecue traditions. In the early days, when refrigeration was scarce, markets would smoke and sell meats to avoid losses to spoilage. Several present-day barbecue joints still have “market” as part of their names—Kreuz Market in Lockhart, City Market in both Luling and Giddings—but they no longer butcher and sell fresh meats. Years ago, the income from barbecue surpassed the meat market revenue, and the emphasis turned to smoked meats. From those modest beginnings and that simple business model, what we know as Texas-style barbecue was born, and beef brisket is the star of the show. Pit-smoked brisket is the foundation of the Texas barbecue tradition and what separates our barbecue from the pork-centric styles in other parts of the U.S.

On more recent photo excursions to Prause, I’ve paid particular attention to the names of the customers who’ve come to buy fresh meats or sit down to a barbecue lunch: Wanjura, Machicek, Dvorak and Schmidt. They are likely the descendants of early settlers—German, Polish and Czech immigrants who also grew up knowing and patronizing their small-town meat markets.
But the Texas barbecue scene has changed dramatically over the past few years. The excitement is in the cities, where energetic, urbanized young professionals have taken on the challenge of producing true pit-smoked barbecue. In Austin, folks happily stand in line for three hours or more at Franklin Barbecue for the pleasure of tasting the amazingly succulent brisket. Citified barbecue isn’t happening just in Austin. Dallas has its own long lines for barbecue at Pecan Lodge, which recently moved from the farmers market near downtown to new digs in Deep Ellum, a business and entertainment district in East Dallas that is enjoying revitalization. Every major city in the state is experiencing the barbecue boom fueled both by great new joints and the Internet. Google “Texas barbecue,” and you’ll get hundreds of websites, blogs, critics and editorial content on the subject. Prause’s doesn’t have a website, although the young daughter of one of the owners has created a Facebook page for the shop.

This urban ’cue explosion has produced shock waves, but they haven’t reached Prause. The barbecue here is prepped as it always has been, served on a paper plate with traditional sides at a reasonable price. Prause’s barbecue is affordable for a workingman’s lunch, and the line may have as many as three folks in front of you, or none. Grab lunch in the “eatin’ room,” and you’ll sit next to working people—cattlemen, merchants—and occasionally a few pilgrims from out of town or even out of state.

It’s likely the team of Prauses running the shop today will be the last family members to do so. The newest generation of offspring is turning elsewhere to make a living, so the current owners are planning to sell. Take my advice: Head to Prause Meat Market now, while it’s still a virtual museum for a way of life that’s disappearing faster than wood smoke into the Texas sky.

Versatile and accomplished photographer Wyatt McSpadden stands on impressive barbecue credentials. Check wyattmcsadden.com for more proof.

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The greatest gadget show on Earth unveils the next generation of smart products and power savers

By Lisa Ogle

So very much stuff, so little time. Most electronics fanatics and gadget geeks would give their Xbox Ones to wander the cavernous space that houses the annual International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. For four days in January, companies of all sizes debuted their most innovative consumer tech products at the 2015 show.

Think self-driving cars and remotely controlled homes. This is the trade show that brings sci-fi to reality. This year, it even served up pizza and cookies made using 3-D printers.

There were 170,000 attendees checking out 3,600 exhibitors in the blindingly bright — even by Vegas standards — 2.2 million square feet of exhibit space (enough space for 35 football fields). Bluebonnet was there, seeking out the best energy-saving (or energy-generating) products on the cutting edge and looking for the trends that may end up in your home or office.

The Internet of Things was the buzz-worthy label that popped up throughout CES, with particular attention paid to the automated home of the just-around-the-corner future, where most every electronic device — from the air conditioner/heater to the alarm system, to lights and appliances — can be wirelessly connected to the homeowner via smart devices. Some allow for remote voice control.

Other major trends from the 2015 showroom floors were the next generation of wearable electronic devices that are more stylish and inconspicuous (such as a fitness tracking bracelet with a large Swarovski crystal to hide the tech behind the bling), health monitoring systems (everything from a biofeedback headband that uses brain waves to train a person to stay calm to office desks and chairs that alert a worker when to stand up to prevent too much sedentary time), intelligent car electronics (yes, self-driving car prototypes), drones and, of course, bigger, better, ultra-high definition TVs.

The electronics show is the launching pad for most every gadget or gizmo we’ll be wearing, using, listening to or watching in the next few years. It’s the place that first lifted the curtain on digital technology and introduced smartphones, touch-screen tablets and electric cars.

The mega-spectacle began in 1967 in New York City, where the pocket radio was introduced. Over the years, many familiar consumer electronics debuted at CES. In 2001, Microsoft’s then-chairman Bill Gates showed off the Xbox video-game console, one of the most successful unveilings in CES history. HDTVs and DVRs were first showcased at CES.

Time in the electronics industry is fleeting and fickle, though. Best-of-show items from years past are obsolete: The videocassette recorder (VCR) introduced at the 1970 show and the compact disc player and camcorder unveiled in 1981 may still be gathering dust on your shelves.

Despite the risk of becoming relics, some flashy 2015 CES showstoppers that could just be the next big things included:

- Samsung’s dual-door oven, which allows you to cook two meals at once at different temperatures in customizeable space;
- LG’s twin washing machine, which lets you wash a large load of clothes and a smaller load at the same time, at different agitation and water temperature settings;
- Netatmo’s sleek, home-security camera with facial recognition;
- EnerPlex Packr Commuter
  - What it does: Besides protecting and carrying belongings, this backpack is integrated with flexible solar panels that can charge personal electronics in just a few hours.
  - Other features: The Packr has a padded interior laptop sleeve, USB port and pockets for water bottles, pens and business cards. Available with orange, lime green or gray trim.
  - Where to buy: goenerplex.com
  - Cost: $99.99

Continued from previous page

Continued on next page
Whirlpool HybridCare Duet Dryer with Heat Pump Technology

What it does: This clothes dryer regenerates energy during operation using a refrigeration system to dry and recycle the same air. It saves up to 73 percent of the energy used by a regular dryer, while providing dryer speed performance and flexibility.

Other features: The 7.3-cubic-foot, Energy Star-certified dryer features moisture sensing technology that monitors heat and moisture levels to automatically end the cycle when clothes are dry, saving energy by preventing over-drying and reducing damage to fabrics. The Eco option also saves energy, though there’s a Speed option for quick drying and a Balanced option that delivers the best of both.

Where to buy: Most home appliance stores  Cost: $1,799-$1,899

FURo-i Home Robot

Why it’s cool: Besides looking like something out of “The Jetsons,” this nifty little gizmo aims to keep families connected by letting you remotely monitor your home (it’s mobile, so you can even have it move from room to room), video chat with loved ones, plan daily activities and control home devices.

Date to market: May 2015  Cost: $899 (pre-order at myfuro.com)

Continued from previous page

dust on your shelves. Despite the risk of becoming relics, some flashy 2015 CES showstoppers that could just be the next big things included:

● Samsung’s dual-door oven, which allows you to cook two meals at once at different temperatures in customizable space;

● LG’s twin washing machine, which lets you wash a large load of clothes and a smaller load at the same time, at different agitation and water temperature settings;

● Netatmo’s sleek, home-security camera with facial recognition;

● Blue Spark Technologies’ bandage-like thermometer that goes under your baby’s arm and continuously tracks his or her temperature, sending alerts to your smartphone.

Some of the products featured at the show are already available, some are hitting the shelves later this year or next, while some are only concepts giving us a glimpse of the future.

Electronics need electricity — and sometimes a lot of it. So we kept our focus on products that help consumers such as Bluebonnet members reduce their electric use, save money and live more safely.

(Except, we just couldn’t resist telling you about the bright, shiny things that were too cool to ignore, Page 22B).
WakaWaka Power+

What it does: This solar device can charge most smartphones or small electronics via a USB connector, or can serve as a flashlight. After 12 hours of sunlight, it can fully charge an iPhone 5 in two hours.

Other features: It is high-impact resistant, made of 100 percent recycled material and available in yellow, black or white. For every one purchased, WakaWaka donates one to a family in need in a developing country.

Where to buy: us.waka-waka.com  
Cost: $79

Aspect Solar Duo-Flex2

What it does: This portable solar charger for the outdoor lover can be strapped to a parked car or backpack or set out on a patio. The power can then be used to operate a laptop or tablet at a campsite or charge your phone while hiking.

Where to buy: aspectsolar.com  
Cost: $119.99

Savant

What it does: This home automation company’s app has a sleek, intuitive design that makes it easy to view and adjust home lighting, temperature and more in any room. You can also program specific settings such as date night, which dims the lights, queues up romantic music and lowers the shades.

Where to buy: savant.com  
Cost: App is free but requires installation of Savant Smart Home system, which starts at about $1,000

Brio smart outlet

What it does: To protect young children who may try to stick something into an electrical socket, this outlet can detect whether an object is a proper plug. It releases a full 120-volt current only to an appliance that needs power. Unlike the company’s safe outlet, the smart outlet also communicates with Brio’s sensors, in-sensor alarms and mobile app to help protect a home against smoke, water damage and carbon monoxide.

Other features: New faceplate colors coming in the future.

Date to market: August 2015
Cost: $99 (pre-order at brio.com)
Lutron Caséta

**Wireless dimmers**

**What it does:** This system offers two types of dimmers — an in-wall unit to replace an existing light switch and a lamp unit for a standard wall receptacle. Both can be controlled remotely and work with energy-saving bulbs, including dimmable LEDs and CFLs.

**Other features:** The app allows you to set specific settings, such as movie night or bedtime.

**Where to buy:** Multiple retail and online stores

**Cost:** $59.95

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QSolar panels

**What they do:** QSolar has created a line of solar panels that are more durable in hail and other harsh conditions. Some are also lighter and even flexible, allowing new applications. For example, the show featured the QDrive Golf Cart Kit, which extends the life of a single charge for electric golf carts.

**Date to market:** Possibly by late 2015

**Cost:** Undetermined but slightly higher than traditional panels

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Brio smart outlet

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**Other features:** New faceplate colors coming in the future.

**Date to market:** August 2015

**Cost:** $99 (pre-order at brio.com)

---

Sengled Snap

**What it does:** This LED bulb doubles as a security device with a built-in 1080p camera, speaker, microphone and infrared night vision. The smart bulb is intended to be installed on the exterior of your home, can be controlled with a mobile app and uses facial recognition and motion detection to allow you to monitor your home via live or recorded video on a smartphone or tablet.

**Date to market:** Summer 2015

**Cost:** $199

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Sensibo

**What it does:** This system turns a remote-controlled air conditioner, such as a window unit, into a smart device similar to a smart thermostat for central AC systems. Sensibo allows remote temperature adjustments, turns the unit off automatically when you leave, learns and adapts to your lifestyle, and finds optimal temperature and humidity levels, helping reduce electric bills.

**Other features:** Keeps track of weather and suggests proper settings. For example, when it’s pleasant outside, it suggests turning off the AC to enjoy the breeze. It even reminds you to change the filter.

**Date to market:** April 2015

**Cost:** $159 for single kit (pre-order at sensibo.com)

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FIBARO Wall Plug

**What it does:** This plug-and-play outlet adapter allows you to control any electrical device remotely as well as monitor power consumption, which is displayed on the device both numerically and by color. It features two plug outlets and two USB power outlets.

**Date to market:** Fall 2015

**Cost:** Undetermined, though European version can be found for $76
In the future, we will be wirelessly, remotely connected to just about everything — our houses, our pets and, yes, even our babies.

Whether it’s a collar that tracks how much exercise your dog gets each day or a digital printer that fits in your pocket, you’ll never be far from a handy Wi-Fi gadget. Whirlpool even envisions your kitchen stovetop as the most convenient computer in your house, displaying websites, social networks and a video screen so you can connect with a friend or family member who knows more than a cookbook.

We couldn’t resist telling you about some of the more fascinating electronic goodies. Here’s a peek at some of the products that may — or may not — make it to a retailer near you.

**Sungale’s Kitchen Screen**

*Why it’s cool:* This device not only displays your digital photos, recipes, notes to family, time and weather, but you can use it to compile a grocery list and even buy those items online via the screen and have them delivered to your home.

*Date to market:* April 2015 (The company is looking for grocery store partners and expects to have one by then.)

*Estimated cost:* $139.99 for 8-inch screen

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**Sproutling baby monitor**

*Why it’s cool:* This device senses, learns and predicts a baby’s sleep patterns and optimal sleep conditions and keeps parents informed via a mobile app. It also has a wearable band for the baby and a smart charger that monitors baby’s room temperature, humidity, and sound and light levels. You can monitor up to four babies at a time with the app if each is outfitted with a Sproutling.

*Where to buy:* sproutling.com (waitlist)

*Cost:* $299

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**Whirlpool’s interactive kitchen concept**

*Why it’s cool:* Having a projector screen with an induction cooktop would make getting dinner on the table a delight. It would take inventory of the things in your fridge that need to be used soon and offer suggestions for your meal. You go with spaghetti, and the screen takes you through the recipe step by step, telling you when to set a pot or pan on the cooktop and automatically heating it to the correct temperature. It would be connected to your smartphone, allowing video chats with a friend or relative if a key secret ingredient is missing from the written recipe. You could reply to your child’s text request to have a friend over for dinner, and the system would adjust the recipe accordingly and tell you what to add to each pot or pan. It would be connected to your oven and automatically preheat it, tell you when to heat the French bread and turn off by itself when it’s the perfect golden brown.

*Date to market:* Who knows? It’s just an idea, folks … but a great one!

*Cost:* Probably a pretty penny
Why it’s cool: This series of ventilation fans, typically used in bathrooms and laundry rooms, is more energy efficient and much quieter than traditional ones. Available for new construction or retrofitting into existing structures. The models have features including varying speeds, humidity sensing, motion sensing, delay timer and lights (including a night light option).

Where to buy: Major home retailer websites

Cost: $86 and up, depending on the model and features

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**ZUta Pocket Printer**

*Why it’s cool:* This gadget, about 4 inches in diameter, allows you to print documents anywhere there’s a flat surface to lay a piece of paper.

*Date to market:* September 2015  
*Cost:* $199 (pre-order at zutalabs.com)

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**Jins Meme activity tracking glasses**

*Why it’s cool:* Unlike many wearables, the Jins Meme glasses look like Ray-Bans and look good on men or women. They gather data on your mind and body through sensors that monitor subtle body changes and sync with a smartphone to provide information such as when you’re sleepy and how many calories you’ve burned.

*Date to market:* Fall 2015  
*Cost:* Expected to be competitive for smart eyewear

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**Mercedes-Benz F 015 autonomous driving vehicle**

*Why it’s cool:* Mercedes-Benz premiered this concept car at CES to showcase what it envisions for the future. Cars will not be just a mode of transportation but a place to retreat. The F 015 features four rotating lounge chairs and interior screens that allow users to plan their route, play games, video conference and more. Passengers can interact intuitively with the connected vehicle through gestures, eye-tracking or by touching the high-resolution screens. The vehicle can be driven manually or autonomously, and is intricately in tune with its surroundings.

*Date to market:* Sooner than you think  
*Cost:* More than you can afford

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**Iris PetSafe SmartDoor**

*Why it’s cool:* When connected to the Iris smart home system, this pet door enables you to remotely control when your pet goes outside and will record when he or she comes and goes.

*Where to buy:* Lowes.com, some retail stores

*Cost:* $220

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**Delta Breez Ventilation Fan**

*Why it’s cool:* This series of ventilation fans, typically used in bathrooms and laundry rooms, is more energy efficient and much quieter than traditional ones. Available for new construction or retrofitting into existing structures. The models have features including varying speeds, humidity sensing, motion sensing, delay timer and lights (including a night light option).

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Bluebonnet challenged two local businesses to replace existing CFL and incandescent bulbs with more energy-efficient LEDs. The results were enlightening.

By Lisa Ogle

A lovely mix of American and European country antique furniture, plush new bedding and one-of-a-kind accessories fill the open space inside Leftovers Antiques on U.S. 290 just west of Brenham. The room-like displays are illuminated by an equally graceful mix of compact fluorescent, light-emitting diode and other bulbs in track lighting, lamps and even chandeliers.

With hundreds of bulbs throughout the store, it can be time consuming to change them when they burn out. And in the case of this and other Bluebonnet-area businesses, some of which have thousands of light bulbs, it’s also a matter of cost. It takes up workers’ time, and the expense of frequently changing that many bulbs adds up.

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative wanted to know whether LEDs could make a difference to the bottom line. So in August 2013, the co-op launched a yearlong study in which Leftovers Antiques and the San Marcos Premium Outlet Restoration Hardware each agreed to replace 120 incandescent or CFL bulbs with LED bulbs.

Consider this a battle of the bulbs: traditional incandescent lights versus energy-efficient bulbs that are becoming widely available and more affordable because of long-term energy savings.

“I was hoping to show that LED lights can both provide the color and brightness that a business needs as well as be a value proposition that pays for itself in two years,” said Wesley Brinkmeyer, manager of energy programs at Bluebonnet.

Leftovers Antiques wanted long-lasting bulbs that would reduce maintenance, heat output and electric use costs in its 10,000-square-foot store. The business, which has been a Bluebonnet member for eight years, saved nearly $210 a month on average during the study.

“I think (the study) was amazing, just our overall cost savings for the year and the next coming year,” said Ed Fulkerson, co-owner of the antiques store. “It’s a real eye-opener for us.”

The study results motivated the store owners to replace remaining incandescents and CFLs, as they burn out, with new LEDs.

“We’d rather spend a little more and save over the years,” he said. “The benefits far outweigh the cost.”

In San Marcos, the light bulb study produced similar results. Eight months into the experiment, only one of Restoration Hardware’s LED bulbs had gone out, which impressed the company enough that it replaced the other half of its bulbs in the outlet store with LEDs. As a result, the 10,000-square-foot store’s savings — nearly $373 a month on average during the study — were greater than those of Leftovers Antiques.

Restoration Hardware is a national retailer that sells luxury home furnishings and has several locations in Texas, including Austin and San Antonio. The San Marcos location has been a Bluebonnet member for nine years.

“With the hours of operation that the two businesses keep, the payback period on the bulbs was quite astounding,” Brinkmeyer said. “Both businesses found a payback period under two years, and based on the businesses’ usage patterns, the bulbs have seven years of projected life. That is five years of reduced energy costs and maintenance costs that will be saved by each business.

It took a little convincing to get the businesses to participate in the study.

“We were concerned because we’re all about light out here and we weren’t sure how the LEDs would reflect on the furniture, but we did a test,” Leftovers Antiques’ Fulkerson said. After the test, they agreed to participate. “We picked the clear white ones, and we quickly realized that it was a benefit.”
**Inside the study**

The businesses featured in our study, Leftovers Antiques and Restoration Hardware, were allowed to select the LED bulbs they wanted to replace 120 old incandescents or CFLs. Here’s what they picked:

**Tested by: Leftovers Antiques**

**Type of bulb:** Philips PAR38 Series 1200 dimmable LED

**Use:** Track and recessed lighting  
**Rated average life:** 45,000 hours  
**Wattage equivalent:** 90 W  
**Rated wattage:** 18 W  
**Cost:** $40

**Tested by: Restoration Hardware**

**Type of bulb:** Philips PAR20 dimmable LED  
**Use:** Safe in damp locations  
**Rated average life:** 45,000 hours  
**Wattage equivalent:** 50 W  
**Rated wattage:** 8 W  
**Cost:** $22.50

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**7 fun facts about LEDs**

- In 2012, about 49 million LEDs were installed in the United States, saving about $675 million in annual energy costs.
- Today’s LED bulbs can be six to seven times more energy efficient than conventional incandescent lights and can reduce energy use by more than 80 percent.
- Good-quality LED bulbs can last more than 25 times longer than traditional light bulbs. If the bulb is burned 24 hours a day, seven days a week, it would last three years.
- From vehicle brake lights to TVs, LEDs are used for their compact size, ease of maintenance, resistance to breakage and ability to focus light in a single direction.
- LEDs contain no mercury, and a recent U.S. Department of Energy study determined that LEDs have a much smaller environmental impact than incandescent bulbs.
- By 2030, LEDs are expected to account for 75 percent of all lighting sales globally.
- Switching entirely to LED lights over the next 20 years could save $250 billion in U.S. energy costs.

*Source: energy.gov*
Bluebonnet, LCRA grant to improve firefighting

Carmeine’s Volunteer Fire Department is outfitting a new 3,000-gallon tanker truck thanks to a $22,500 grant from Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative and the Lower Colorado River Authority. The money will be used to purchase and install a new tank, pump and other necessary equipment.

“This new tanker will allow us to more than double the amount of water we can bring to a fire in one trip,” said Daryl Ray, secretary of the Carmeine Volunteer Fire Department, which serves 1,200 people in Fayette and Washington counties. “It also will be equipped to serve as a firefighting truck if needed,” Ray said, and enable Carmeine firefighters to provide additional support to neighboring volunteer fire departments when needed.

The grant is part of the LCRA’s Community Development Partnership Program, providing economic development and community assistance grants to cities, counties, volunteer fire departments, regional development councils and other nonprofit organizations in LCRA’s service area.

Members warned of fraud attempts

Central Texans should beware of thieves trying to trick consumers into making payments for accounts alleged to be delinquent. Similar scams have targeted electric utility customers for more than a year and have been detected again recently in Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative’s service area.

“Like all utilities across the country, we have seen an increase in attempts to scam our members into making cash or credit card payments and to provide personal information,” said Mark Rose, Bluebonnet’s general manager. “The most important thing we and our members can do to prevent these scams is be aware of them, inform our friends and neighbors about them and report them to Bluebonnet and local law enforcement when they occur.”

To protect members from fraud, Bluebonnet follows these official procedures: Within two weeks following a payment’s due date, the co-op makes at least two attempts to contact members whose bill payments are delinquent: By mail and through a recorded message in a courtesy phone call. The co-op offers multiple payment options through Bluebonnet’s online payment system.

If you have not received a reminder in the mail or a courtesy call about a delinquent account and someone claiming to be from Bluebonnet calls to try to collect a payment, do not pay. Do not give out personal or financial information to anyone claiming to be a Bluebonnet employee or contractor who asks you for account information or for a payment on your account.

If someone contacts you and you suspect he or she is unlawfully posing as a Bluebonnet employee, try to get as much information about the caller as possible. Ask the caller to provide his or her name, including the proper spelling. Ask for a phone number so you can return the call. Most important, use your telephone’s caller ID to note the phone number used by the caller. As soon as possible, share the information with Bluebonnet by calling 800-842-7708 between 7 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or call local law enforcement.

Scammers are not just targeting electric utility bills. Consumers should be on the watch for any attempts to gain their confidential information, including driver’s license, Social Security, credit card and bank account numbers and date of birth. As the media and the public become aware of ongoing scams, thieves often change tactics and try different ways to commit fraud.

Remember, if a request for personal information doesn’t sound right to you, it probably isn’t.

Q & A

Q: What is a smart thermostat? I’ve heard about them and hope to win one in your Energy Tracking Tool contest (see Page 26 for more information). Why are they better than my old thermostat?

A: A smart thermostat is a wireless device that can be programmed remotely to schedule temperature settings. You can change settings from a smartphone, tablet or desktop computer. Some smart thermostats provide weather forecasts and let manufacturers make software upgrades seemingly. Others adjust automatically to humidity and other weather conditions. Some even learn and adapt to your habits.

The challenge with traditional or even programmable thermostats is that few people have the same schedule every day or week. Some smart thermostats adjust during the day to be more efficient as your lifestyle changes. For example, some learn the temperature you prefer on rainy days and adjust accordingly whenever it rains. Sensors also adjust to a more efficient temperature when there is no movement in the house.

There are several smart thermostats on the market, each with pros and cons. Some require professional installation; prices and features vary, and displays range from simple to complex and colorful.

Smart thermostats help reduce energy bills, especially when used with Bluebonnet’s free tools for members. We send text and email alerts when you reach a certain budget limit and when power use spikes. Our Energy Tracking Tool provides detailed information about your power use and costs, down to the hour. Learn more about that — and our contest — by going to bluebonnet.coop’s home page. Hover your cursor on the Energy Tracking Tool icon and click on “Find out more.” Enter our drawing for a free smart thermostat!

If you have questions about smart thermostats, these manufacturers’ websites may help: nest.com and wiifithermostat.com. For questions about the contest, email memberservices@bluebonnet.coop or call 800-842-7708.

— Rebecca Brotherton, member service representative

From left are Kate Holman (LCRA), Amie Jo Pratt, Daryl Ray, Jason Carmean (VFD/Bluebonnet), Scott Pratt, J.C. Pohl, Chris Coufal, Mark Johnson (Bluebonnet), Russell Jurk (Bluebonnet board member), Lori Berger (LCRA board member) and Floyd Etzel.

LCRA photo
**Substation dedication honors former Bluebonnet director**

By Will Holford

Former Bluebonnet Board Director Lyle Wolz had a gift for making people feel special. And those who knew Lyle remember something special about him, whether it was his beaming smile, quick wit or good cheer. Now there is one more way to remember Wolz – Bluebonnet’s newly renamed Lyle Wolz Substation on Texas Highway 21 near Deanville.

Lyle’s family, friends, fellow Bluebonnet directors and co-op employees dedicated the substation Feb. 5 to honor and recognize his 30 years of service, from 1983 to 2013, on the co-op’s board of directors, including 10 years as board chairman. Lyle died April 4, 2014.

“Lyle loved Bluebonnet and serving its members on the Board of Directors,” said Ben Flencher, Bluebonnet’s board chairman. “This is a perfect way to honor his memory and service to Bluebonnet. Lyle and I came on the board about the same time and he was a tremendous influence on me and all the directors. He never met a stranger and truly believed in the cooperative principles.”

The Lyle Wolz substation is one of 45 substations on Bluebonnet’s electric distribution system. It began operating in 1957, and was expanded in 1975. It is the only one to be dedicated to a Bluebonnet board member. The substation provides electricity to 5,259 meters through 1,010 miles of power lines from Deanville to Caldwell, Cedar Point, Lexington, Birch Creek, Dime Box and Giddings.

At the Lyle Wolz substation dedication in February, Ben Flencher, left, chairman of Bluebonnet’s Board of Directors, joined Esther Wolz, wife of the late Lyle Wolz (inset), a longtime member of the Bluebonnet board, and Bluebonnet General Manager Mark Rose.

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**Bluebonnet to elect board members May 12**

Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative’s Annual Meeting this year is May 12, at the Sons of Hermann Hall in Giddings. Three of 11 seats on the Board of Directors are up for election that day, and co-op officials will present members with the annual state-of-the-co-op message.

Board members serve staggered three-year terms. Seats up for election this year represent District 1, Caldwell, Guadalupe, Gonzales and Hays counties; District 2, Travis County; and District 3, Bastrop County.

The deadline to declare candidacy and file required documentation and fees in order to seek a seat on the Board was Feb. 11. Look for more details about the Annual Meeting in Bluebonnet’s pages inside April’s Texas Co-op Power magazine or on our website, bluebonnet.coop.

Sons of Hermann Hall is at 1031 County Road 223, Giddings. Registration begins at 1:30 p.m. May 12 and the meeting begins at 2:30 p.m. If you cannot attend, you can vote by proxy. Proxy forms will be mailed to Bluebonnet members this month.

If you have questions about the meeting, call 800-842-7708 from 7 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday or email memberservices@bluebonnet.coop.
If winter has put a chill in your bill, Bluebonnet has a tool to help. Our online Energy Tracking Tool shows how much power you’ve used, its cost and the temperature outdoors — down to the hour.

**Try our Energy Tracking Tool**

**Enter to win a smart thermostat!**

Use Bluebonnet’s online Energy Tracking Tool, then tell us what you learn about your power use and habits and you’ll be entered in a drawing to win a wireless, remotely controllable, smart thermostat (up to $250 value). You’ve got three ways to enter the drawing: Email us at magazine@bluebonnet.coop, or go to our Facebook or Twitter pages and tell us what you’ve discovered.

Don’t delay — the contest ends March 31. To get details about the Energy Tracking Tool and the drawing, go to bluebonnet.coop’s home page, hover your cursor over the ‘Try Our Energy Tracking Tool’ icon and click ‘Find out more.’ You must be a Bluebonnet member with an active online account to participate.

Questions? Call 800-842-7708 or email memberservices@bluebonnet.coop.
Amie and Jolie Sikes made a future for themselves by having a blast with the past. The creative and savvy sisters — educated at Texas A&M University but not a perfect fit in the 9-to-5 universe — salvaged their hearts and tons of flea market goods to become reigning queens of the junk pile.

Their Junk Gypsy business is headquartered in a nearly 8,000-square-foot scrap-metal mansion in Round Top in the Fayette County area that attracts 100,000 visitors each spring and autumn for huge roadside antique shows. The Junk Gypsy store is more carnival midway than mall. Much of the merchandise is upcycled from flea markets: red glittered bowling pins, “chippy peely” refurbished furniture, vintage signs, oil paintings of unknown origin, beaded chandeliers, plumed band hats — the load goes on forever.

The Junk Gypsies can turn any piece of junk into an unexpected fixer-upper coveted by Nashville stars, free spirits and road-tripping shoppers.

Country singers Miranda Lambert and Blake Shelton hired Amie and Jolie to decorate their 2011 wedding reception. Amie and Jolie also remodeled Lambert’s tour bus and Airstream travel trailer. Airstream makeovers are a regular gig: one for country star Dierks Bentley, another for Lambert’s mother, and one for new Rock and Roll Hall of Fame band Green Day.

You can catch the DIY sisters in action on their cable show, with a third season debuting this summer. Expect the unexpected. Viewers have seen miniature antique sailing ships become chandeliers for Amie’s house and windmill blades become a ceiling fan for Jolie’s house.

Junk Gypsy is a national brand. The sisters design for Pottery Barn Teen, and their natural furniture paint arrives in stores this spring.

“So many things have happened since we’ve been here (in Round Top). It’s unreal,” Amie said. “We’re so much more content and so much happier and more at peace, and I think all that just kind of conveys through the business.”

The Junk Gypsies moved to Round Top from College Station in 2010 so their children could grow up in a small town. Their 40-acre Gypsyville property includes the Wander Inn, a rustic lodge scheduled to open to the public later this year, and a 20,000-square-foot barn that houses a workshop and the junk inventory. The sisters’ parents — Phillip (a lifelong woodworker) and Janie Sikes, whose second-hand shopping inspired the business — work alongside their daughters.

Junking was more a calling than a career choice. Amie and Jolie grew up in Overton in East Texas, mopping floors and tossing pizzas in the family restaurant. Amie used her journalism degree to work as a legislative aide at the Texas Capitol and was headed to law school. Jolie’s degree in biomedical science and master’s in health and nutrition were leading to medical school. But cubicles didn’t compare with the creative joy of flea market crawls they’d done with their mother since childhood.

They quit their jobs and began full-time junking in 1998 with $2,000 and no business plan. Their first booth at the sprawling First Monday Trade Days in Canton was a flop — not one sale.

“Thank goodness we didn’t give up,” Jolie said. “Thank goodness we take rejection well.” They treated rejection like junk. They brushed it off, created a different look and gave it a new destiny.

This is one in a series of profiles of Bluebonnet commercial accounts.
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The Old Indian Doctor
Crumley treated ailments in 19th-century Texas with roots, seeds, bark and plants

BY GENE FOWLER

When Dr. Benjamin Thomas Crumley died in Lampasas County in 1901, family members could not believe that “the Old Indian Doctor” was truly gone. They held a mirror under his nose to check for breath. After all, Crumley had treated Central Texans with plant-based remedies for nearly half a century.

In 1879, the Williamson County Sun reported that Crumley “was considered, to some extent, an oddity because he wore his hair very long.” The Sun noted that at his third wedding, “the Doctor had his hair platted up and roses stuck about it.”

Crumley’s descendants have traced his story through an intriguing tangle of fact and folklore. Great-grandson Larion Crumley of San Antonio says the doctor was born in Cherokee Nation, South Carolina, in 1822. Some believed that he did attend medical school. One legend says that he was expelled from a university after a night of heavy drinking.

Crumley maintained that he was part Cherokee, and another family story has him studying medicine with the Cherokee for seven years. After serving in the Civil War (and possibly in the Mexican War before that), he was living and doctoring near Martindale in Hays County during the 1870s. When a flood destroyed his home, he relocated to Buttercup near present-day Cedar Park, where he also served as postmaster.

Descendants report that physicians in Austin often called on the Old Indian Doctor for consultation. Another story holds that mysterious horsemen once came to Buttercup, blindfolded Doc Crumley and led him to a remote hideout, where he patched up the wounds of outlaw Sam Bass.

Jim Sims, another great-grandson, was treated with the Old Indian Doctor’s remedies, as they were passed down through the family’s oral tradition. “He used horehound for coughs, colds, sore throats and lung troubles,” says Sims. “It was administered as a syrup made by boiling the plants in water. Sassafras was administered as a relaxant and to settle the stomach. It was prepared from thin shavings off the roots that were steeped to make a tea. He treated chest colds with mustard seeds that were crushed and placed in a small amount of hot water to make a paste that was used in a poultice. Willow bark was used as a pain reliever, and Johnson grass or broomcorn tea was prescribed for kidney and urinary problems. Chicory root was roasted, ground and brewed in hot water to be consumed as a sedative and also for its laxative effect.”

Crumley also relieved pain with opium and morphine. Great-great-grandson Scott Crumley, an Austin pharmacist, says family history indicates that the doctor himself became dependent on morphine, which he took to treat a chronic war wound. Whiskey, coal oil, castor oil and the patent medicine Pitcher’s Castoria rounded out the Old Indian Doctor’s pharmacopeia.

The doctor’s saddlebag held a trusty madstone for treating rabid animal bites. Said to be found in the stomachs of deer, madstones could reportedly draw the poison out of a fresh wound or bite. Larion Crumley recalls seeing the heirloom stone as a boy: “It was an oval, quartz-like stone about an inch and a half in diameter and three-quarters of an inch thick.”

Crumley relocated to northern Lampasas County near the community of Evant in 1890, where folks long remembered seeing him wearing a white linen suit, riding a white horse to visit patients.

One evening in 1901, as granddaughter Beulah Thomas Crumley combed his hair, the doctor said with tears in his eyes, “Sweet this is the last time I’ll see you.” Called out to deliver a set of twins, Crumley suffered a heart attack on the trip home. By morning, the Old Indian Doctor was gone.

Gene Fowler is an Austin writer who specializes in history.
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Your Secret Ingredient

From banana pudding made with Ritz crackers to a pork loin slow-cooked in cinnamon applesauce, submissions to the Your Secret Ingredient contest earned high scores across the board.

My contribution is my daughter’s favorite black bean soup. There are two secret ingredients: a dash of honey and smoked Spanish paprika. You’ll want to adjust the salt level to taste, as vegetable broth tends to vary in flavor and sodium levels.

ANNA GINSBERG, FOOD EDITOR

Emma’s Vegetarian Black Bean Soup

1 tablespoon olive oil
⅔ cup finely chopped onion
⅔ cup finely chopped celery
½ cup finely chopped carrots
1 teaspoon cumin
2 teaspoons minced garlic
1 teaspoon smoked Spanish paprika
1 teaspoon honey
1 can fire-roasted diced tomatoes (14 ounces), drained
2 cups vegetable broth, salted
2 cans black beans (15 ounces each), drained
Salt to taste
½ cup frozen or canned corn, drained (optional)

1. Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large pot. Add onion, celery, carrots and cumin and cook 2 to 3 minutes or until onion is tender and fragrant. Add garlic and cook 1 minute more.
2. Stir in smoked paprika, honey, tomatoes, vegetable broth and black beans. Stir well and season to taste with salt, if needed.
3. If desired, purée the soup in a blender, return to stove and heat until warm. Alternatively, skip the puréeing step, add frozen or canned corn, rewarmed, and serve the soup chunky-style.

Servings: 6. Serving size: 10 ounces. Per serving: 228 calories, 10.50 g protein, 3.90 g fat, 45.64 g carbohydrates, 9.57 g dietary fiber, 1,666 mg sodium, 28.25 g sugars, 0 mg cholesterol

RICK PATRICK
Recipes

Your Secret Ingredient

THIS MONTH’S RECIPE CONTEST WINNER

PEGGY DECKER | CENTRAL TEXAS EC

Peanut butter on your pork chops? Cloves in your chili? Many cooks have unexpected tricks up their sleeves. This month’s winner also came up with a witty name for her recipe, based on its surprising—and delicious—substitution.

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Pudding on the Ritz

“I stumbled upon this recipe one day when I had all the ingredients on hand [for banana pudding] but the vanilla wafers. I looked around and found Ritz crackers instead. I like sweet and salty, so I gave it a try. Tested it with my family, and it became an immediate success!”

1. Prepare the pudding as directed on the box, using the amount of milk indicated.
2. Cover the bottom of a 9-by-13-inch dish with crackers. Cover the cracker layer with sliced bananas, then cover the banana layer with prepared pudding.
3. Repeat layers with remaining crackers, bananas and pudding.
4. Spread whipped topping over the top and chill dessert at least 2 hours or until ready to serve.

Servings: 14. Serving size: 7 ounces. Per serving: 329 calories, 5.02 g protein, 12.91 g fat, 48.35 g carbohydrates, 1.71 g dietary fiber, 514 mg sodium, 25.31 g sugars, 6 mg cholesterol

Pork Shoulder Roast

STEFANIE BALDOCK | WHARTON COUNTY EC

“The cinnamon in the applesauce is the secret ingredient.”

Chicken Chili

MILLIE KIRCHOFF | NUÉCOS EC

“Ground cloves add that secret something.”

Banana Muffins

KAREN WOOD | WHARTON COUNTY EC

“Mayonnaise is the secret ingredient in these muffins. They are so moist and tasty.”

$100 Recipe Contest

August’s recipe contest topic is Breakfast Foods. Mom was right: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Do you start the morning with bacon and eggs, pastries and fruit, tacos and salsa—or something else entirely? Let us know. The deadline is March 10.

There are three ways to enter: ONLINE at TexasCoopPower.com/contests; MAIL to 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701; FAX to (512) 763-3401. Include your name, address and phone number, plus your co-op and the name of the contest you are entering.
Salsa With a Secret
VALARIE WALKER | SOUTH PLAINS EC
“Who would have thought to put sauerkraut in salsa?”

4 pounds fresh beefsteak tomatoes, blanched, peeled and chopped
¼ cup cilantro leaves
½ cup roasted red bell pepper, chopped
1 cup rinsed, drained sauerkraut
1 can chipotle peppers (7.5 ounces), chopped, undrained

Juice reserved from red pepper while roasting
4 tomatillos, sliced
½ cup lime juice
1 can mild green chiles (4 ounces), undrained
4 cloves garlic, pressed
4 cloves pickled garlic, pressed
2 teaspoons white sugar
Dash black pepper
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon ground cumin
1 bunch chopped scallions

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine tomatoes, cilantro, roasted red pepper, sauerkraut and chipotle peppers.
2. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the reserved red pepper liquid and the tomatillos. Cover with plastic wrap, leaving a small vent hole, and microwave on high 1 minute or until tomatillos are tender. Let cool, then stir into tomato mixture.
3. Add all remaining ingredients except scallions and stir. Mix in scallions 1 hour before serving. Makes about 1 gallon.

Servings: 32. Serving size: 4 ounces. Per serving:
153 calories, 8.13 g protein, 1.28 g fat, 33.17 g carbohydrates, 7.50 g dietary fiber, 1,424 mg sodium, 21.81 g sugars, 0 mg cholesterol

Texas-Style Peanut Butter Baked Pork Chops
ELVIS AND GINGER MCQUINN | BARTLETT EC
“Peanut butter adds a twist to these chops.”

4 thick-cut pork chops
5 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
4 tablespoons honey
2 teaspoons light brown sugar
3 teaspoons chili powder
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
2 teaspoons olive oil
3 tablespoons light brown sugar
3 tablespoons honey

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a large pan with foil and apply nonstick cooking spray.
2. Rub pork chops with olive oil and place in pan. Bake 30 minutes.
3. Whisk together any leftover olive oil with remaining ingredients and set aside.
4. After chops have baked 30 minutes, remove from oven and brush them evenly with peanut butter mixture. Return to oven and bake an additional 10–15 minutes until chops are fully cooked and sauce is thickened and caramelized.

Servings: 4. Serving size: 1 chop. Per serving:
332 calories, 5.44 g protein, 23.19 g fat, 29.09 g carbohydrates, 1.99 g dietary fiber, 707 mg sodium, 25.78 g sugars, 0 mg cholesterol

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Chicago Doctor Invents Affordable Hearing Aid Outperforms Many Higher Priced Hearing Aids

Reported by J. Page

Chicago: Board-certified physician Dr. S. Cherukuri has done it once again with his newest invention of a medical grade ALL DIGITAL affordable hearing aid.

This new digital hearing aid is packed with all the features of $3,000 competitors at a mere fraction of the cost. Now, most people with hearing loss are able to enjoy crystal clear, natural sound — in a crowd, on the phone, in the wind — without suffering through “whistling” and annoying background noise.

New Digital Hearing Aid Outperforms Expensive Competitors

This sleek, lightweight, fully programmed hearing aid is the outgrowth of the digital revolution that is changing our world. While demand for “all things digital” caused most prices to plunge (consider DVD players and computers, which originally sold for thousands of dollars and today can be purchased for less), the cost of a digital medical hearing aid remains out of reach.

Satisfied Buyers Agree AIR is the Best Digital Value!

“I am hearing things I didn’t know I was missing. Really amazing. I’m wearing them all the time” —Linda Irving, Indiana

“Almost work too well. I am a teacher and hearing much better now” —Lillian Barden, California

“I have used many expensive hearing aids, some over $5,000. The Aire have greatly improved my enjoyment of life” —Som Y., Michigan

“I would definitely recommend them to my patients with hearing loss” —Amy S., Audiologist, Indiana

Dr. Cherukuri knew that many of his patients would benefit but couldn’t afford the expense of these new digital hearing aids. Generally they are not covered by Medicare and most private health insurance.

The doctor evaluated all the high priced digital hearing aids on the market, broke them down to their base components, and then created his own affordable version — called the MDHearingAid® AIR for its virtually invisible, lightweight appearance.

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**WEB EXTRAS at TexasCoopPower.com** Don’t paws, even for a second. See more furry friends online.

**BRETT GORDON**, Navasota Valley EC: Every night, daughter Reagan would read Charlie a bedtime story. Charlie now runs wild in the NVEC area.

**REBEKAH BONGATO**, Sam Houston EC: What big teeth you have!

**SUSAN MATT**, Pedernales EC: Kiki, the pit bull, plays with a fawn on a walk.

**HEATHER EILERS**, Pedernales EC: Molly Ann sure misses Lance Eilers while he’s gone all day at work.

**UPCOMING CONTESTS**

| JUNE  SLOW DOWN | DUE MAR 10 |
| JUNE  MY FIRST CAR | DUE APR 10 |
| JUNE  AROUND THE FARM | DUE APR 10 |

All entries must include name, address, daytime phone and co-op affiliation, plus the contest topic and a brief description of your photo.

**ONLINE:** Submit highest-resolution digital images at TexasCoopPower.com/contests. **MAIL:** Focus on Texas, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701. A stamped, self-addressed envelope must be included if you want your entry returned (approximately six weeks). Please do not submit irreplaceable photographs—send a copy or duplicate. We do not accept entries via email. We regret that Texas Co-op Power cannot be responsible for photos that are lost in the mail or not received by the deadline.

**ASHLEY MCFADIN**, Guadalupe Valley EC: Horses enjoy a lovely spring day.
March 6

Uvalde [6–7] Piecemakers Quilt Show, (830) 278-4317, lcpoehler@yahoo.com


Crockett Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives, (936) 544-4276, pwfaa.org

Johnson City Annual Spaghetti Dinner and Bingo, (830) 868-4469, jclibrarysite.org

Robstown [7–8] GCGMS Gem and Mineral Show, (361) 877-5820, gcgms.org

March 7

Lexington Spring Antique Show and Sale, (979) 540-7026, facebook.com/angelkissesantiques

March 12


March 13

Lufkin [13-14] Needles in the Pines Quilt Show, (936) 422-9892

March 14

Luling Rajun Cajun Gumbo Throwdown Cookoff, (830) 875-3214, lulingmainstreet.com

March 20


March 21

Raymondville [21–22] Raymondville Second Annual Heritage Festival, (956) 652-2023, raymondville.com

March 22

Fredericksburg [22–23] Annual Fredericksburg Art Fair, (512) 395-3003, fredericksburgartfair.com

March 24

Sweetwater [24–25] Sweetwater Baptist Church’s Fine Arts Festival, (325) 397-2322, sweetwaterbaptist.org

March 25


March 26

Bryan [26–27] Bryan Lebanese Community Center’s Annual St. Philip’s Food Festival, (979) 364-0590, bryanlebanese.org

March 27

Georgetown [27–28] Georgetown Community’s Annual Colorado Festival, (512) 869-3364, visitgeorgetowntx.com

March 28


March 29

Culpeper [29–30] Culpeper Spring Festival, (540) 827-3828, culpepermall.com

March 30


March 31

Sturgis [31–32] Sturgis Panhandle Spring Festival, (806) 373-4898, sturgisprffest.com

April 1


April 2


April 3

Lufkin [3–4] Lufkin Outdoor Festival, (936) 422-9892

April 4

Goliad [4–5] First Presbyterian Church’s Annual Texas Wine Festival, (361) 645-3752, presidiolabahia.org

April 5


April 6


April 7

Raymondville [7–8] Raymondville Annual Heritage Festival, (956) 652-2023, raymondville.com

April 8

Kerrville [8–9] Kerrville Spring Festival, (830) 438-2424, kerrvilletexas.com

April 9

Culpeper [9–10] Culpeper Spring Festival, (540) 827-3828, culpepermall.com

April 10


April 11


April 12


April 13

Lufkin [13–14] Lufkin Outdoor Festival, (936) 422-9892

April 14


April 15


April 16

Culpeper [16–17] Culpeper Spring Festival, (540) 827-3828, culpepermall.com

April 17

Madisonville [17–18] Madisonville’s Annual Fine Arts Festival, (903) 324-3301, madisonvillechamber.com

April 18

Sturgis [18–19] Sturgis Panhandle Spring Festival, (806) 373-4898, sturgisprffest.com

April 19


April 20

Round Top [20–21] Round Top Spring Festival, (979) 249-3129, festivalhill.org

April 21

Raymondville [21–22] Raymondville Annual Heritage Festival, (956) 652-2023, raymondville.com

April 22


April 23

Culpeper [23–24] Culpeper Spring Festival, (540) 827-3828, culpepermall.com

April 24


April 25

Sturgis [25–26] Sturgis Panhandle Spring Festival, (806) 373-4898, sturgisprffest.com

April 26


Mid-December to March

Goliad Massacre Re-enactment

Goliad [March 28–29]

(361) 645-3752, presidiolabahia.org

This two-day event brings the last days of Col. James W. Fannin’s command to life through battle re-enactments, re-created camps and touching candlelit scenes at Presidio La Bahia. The Goliad Massacre, March 27, 1836, claimed the lives of 342 men at the hands of Mexican soldiers during the Texas Revolution.

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Pick of the Month

Goliad Massacre Re-enactment

Goliad [March 28–29]

(361) 645-3752, presidiolabahia.org

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West [21–22] Central Texas Ceramic Expo, (254) 716-5227, westceramicshow.com

Victoria [27–28] Quilt Guild of Greater Victoria Quilt Show, (281) 794-0068, QuiltGuildVictoria.org

March 21–22
Jasper
Jasper Airshow

21
Lakehills LUMC Annual Fish Fry and Auction, (830) 751-2404, lakehillsumc.org
Gonzales Master Gardeners’ Spring Plant Sale, (830) 672-2953, gonzalesmastergardeners.org
San Patricio [21–22] World Championship Rattlesnake Races, (361) 547-5561, wc rattlesnakeraces.com

22
Groesbeck [22, 25–28] Limestone County Fair and Youth Livestock Show, (254) 729-3712, limestone-co-fair-grounds.com

26
Beaumont [26–April 5] South Texas State Fair, (409) 832-9991, ymbl.org
Warrenton [26–April 5] Warrenton Antique Show and Sale, (979) 249-3141, warrentonantiques-renckhall.com

27
Georgetown [27–28] Quilt and Stitchery Show, (512) 658-6973, handcraftsunlimited.com

Submit Your Event!
We pick events for the magazine directly from TexasCoopPower.com. Submit your event for May by March 10, and it just might be featured in this calendar!

April
4
Comanche Comanche-Wide Garage Sale, (325) 356-3233, comanchechamber.org

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Apply by March 13 at www.TREWA.org

The Texas Rural Women’s Association (TREWA) will award fifteen $1,500 scholarships to TREWA members or their children. Membership dues are $10 per year.

For a complete listing, please visit TexasCoopPower.com/events.
Named for the nearby intersection of the north and south forks of the Llano River, Junction is a laid-back town that entertains travelers as a worthy destination itself or as a welcome stopover on a trip across Texas.

One of the area’s jewels is South Llano River State Park, which offers RV camping and a walk-in tent campground that helps create a car-free experience of camping as it was meant to be. Swim, fish or tube on the river for an afternoon, but much of the river bottom is closed from October through March to protect roosting turkeys. That limits river access for swimming to a bridge area near the park entrance, but canoes and kayaks are permitted on the water during the turkey roosting season.

If you decide on canoeing or kayaking, local outfitter South Llano River Canoes & Kayaks rents boats and will transport you 6.2 miles upriver to start the three- to four-hour adventure that ends at the company headquarters about a mile south of the park. Along the way, cast for perch and bass, navigate the occasional mild rapid, or just drift along beneath the overhead canopy of oaks and pecans.

Fall and winter offer ideal weather for a short stroll or a longer hike, and more than 20 miles of trails meander through the park and the adjacent 2,630-acre wildlife management area. Most of the trails also are open to mountain biking. For a more sedate experience of the park’s natural beauty, sit in one of the comfy bird blinds overlooking wildlife watering and feeding stations. Birds frequent these sites most of the day, although morning and evening consistently offer the best viewing. Expect to see fly-catchers, swallows, wrens, warblers, hawks and hummingbirds. Laminated photos and guidebooks in the blinds will help you identify the birds you see.

At nearby Fort McKavett, you’ll find evidence of the chain of military posts built in the mid-1800s to protect the much-traveled road between San Antonio and El Paso. The military withdrew from Fort McKavett in 1883, but many structures survived. Peruse the visitors center’s account of the fort’s history and then amble through a self-guided walking tour of the restored buildings and ruins surrounding the spacious parade ground. A well-marked trail leads you the short distance into a wooded valley where springs feed the headwaters of the San Saba River (also a great kayaking destination).

Plan a 50-minute trip south from Junction to Devil’s Sinkhole State Natural Area, the site of what is believed to be Texas’ largest single-chamber cave. Best known for morning and evening bat tours May to October, Devil’s Sinkhole is worth a day tour anytime. Tours take place Wednesday through Sunday and include panoramic views of the surrounding Hill Country, guided hikes, two bird blinds for spotting golden-cheeked warblers and black-capped vireos, and the overlook above the 360-foot sinkhole.

Upwards of 3 million Mexican free-tailed bats arrive here in spring from their winter home in Mexico. It takes nearly an hour for all of these flying mammals to spiral up out of the cave each night on their way to gobble a collective 30 tons of insects. Tours begin at the Rocksprings Visitors Center and make the 16-mile drive to the site by car convoy. Make reservations.

Back in Junction, consider Cooper’s BBQ just north of Interstate 10 on North Main Street for lunch or dinner. Cooper’s serves smoked pork chops, ribs, turkey, chicken and brisket, all prepared daily in outdoor pits. Picnic tables under the sprawling oak tree out back invite you to feast on the meat, sides, homemade sauces and cobbler outside. Another proven dining option is Isaack’s Restaurant on Main Street, open since 1950 and serving breakfast all day along with seafood, chicken-fried steak, catfish and steaks.

Noncampers can consider Schuster Ranch, which has two cabins overlooking a wooded creek, perfect for birding, stargazing or relaxing around the fire pit. Or chill out at spacious Cool River Cabin on the peaceful grounds of Native American Seed Company just a short walk from the river.

Melissa Gaskill is an Austin writer who specializes in nature topics.
Individually hand-crafted in solid sterling silver, this big, bold ring features the shining state of Texas against a genuine black onyx center stone, surrounded by a tooled leather-look border with Texas stars accented in 18K gold plating. A genuine diamond is hand-set at the site of the state capital of Austin, and more Lone Star icons decorate the sides. There’s the famous Texas longhorn on one side and a cowboy hat on the other—both standing out against an 18K gold-plated design that is finished with a lasso-style border. Adding to the powerful effect, the words “Texas Pride” are engraved inside.

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