

WCEC Members Support Community Organizations

NOVEMBER IS THE TIME of year when we gather to give thanks and count every little blessing. At Wood County Electric Cooperative, we're counting our blessings and giving thanks, too, by giving to important causes in our community through Operation Round Up and the Wood County Electric Charitable Foundation.

In this latest round of giving, the foundation awarded \$63,050 to five organizations that serve those in WCEC's nine-county service territory.



WCEC members set the gold standard of generosity. Since the first donation in 2018, the WCECF has awarded \$469,757 to local non-profit organizations.

The recipients of the five most recent grants are:

The Texas Ramp Project, \$5,000.

TRP provides free wheelchair ramps to low-income adults and others with disabilities. Ramps funded by

this grant are built exclusively by volunteers and will be within WCEC's service territory.

Forever Young Activity Center, \$7,550. This facility provides adult fellowship programs that enrich the lives of older adults, elevate their welfare, and help them maintain health and happiness. The center will use its grant for a new heating, ventilating and air conditioning system.

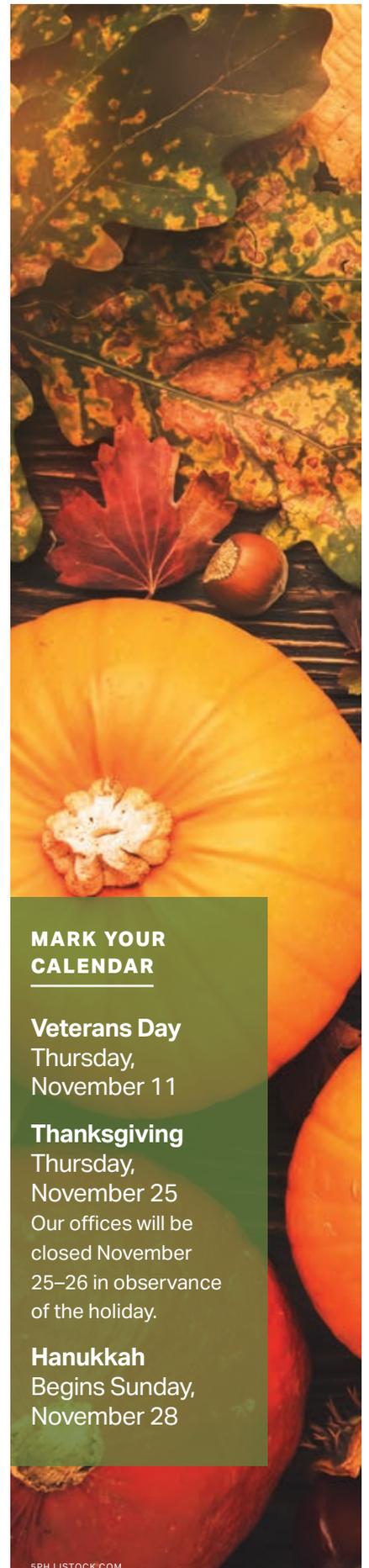
Jarvis Christian College, \$15,000. Located in Hawkins, the college will use the grant money to stock its nonprofit food pantry to assist students with food security, emergency travel and other personal needs.

Communities in Schools of Northeast Texas, \$15,000. Serving students in Franklin, Titus, Hopkins and Wood counties, this organization provides physical, financial and emotional support to at-risk students to help them stay in school.

Friends of the Arboretum, \$20,500. This organization provides educational and colorful gardens open to the public, along with learning and volunteer opportunities. With its grant, Friends of the Arboretum will build an outdoor pavilion to be used for educational opportunities and gatherings and to generate revenue through rental of the facility.

The WCECF is funded through Operation Round Up, a voluntary program in which participating co-op members round up their monthly electric bills to the nearest dollar. Each member gives an average of \$5.60 a year, but with 78% of members participating, the combined donations are significant. The program has funded food banks, lifesaving equipment, playground projects, civic events, wheelchair ramps and many other worthy causes.

Nonprofit organizations within Wood County EC's nine-county service territory are eligible to apply for Operation Round Up grants, which are awarded twice a year, in the spring and the fall. The deadline for applications for the next grant cycle is April 1, 2022. All eligible entities are encouraged to review the qualifications and download the application at wcec.org. Applications will be considered at the foundation's fall board meeting. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Veterans Day
Thursday,
November 11

Thanksgiving
Thursday,
November 25
Our offices will be closed November 25-26 in observance of the holiday.

Hanukkah
Begins Sunday,
November 28

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Beware of Contractor Scams

WITH MORE FOLKS working from home, more people are hiring contractors to complete house repairs. If you're improving your space and need some help, be diligent about checking out the people you allow onto your property.

Here are some telltale signs that a contractor isn't legit:

The contractor quotes you a price that's so low it seems like a steal. Be aware that the pandemic has caused a shortage of building materials, so home improvement jobs are likely to cost more—not less—than they did a couple of years ago.

The contractor says you don't need to sign a contract. That means that he doesn't have to sign one, either. Insist on a written estimate and a written guarantee that you will not be surprised by unapproved charges.

The contractor insists on payment upfront. If you pay in full before the work has even begun, you probably will never see that contractor again. It's customary and reasonable for the contractor to ask you for a deposit on the work, but it shouldn't be any more than one-quarter of the estimate.

The contractor accepts only cash or offers you a deep discount if you pay with cash. That contractor probably is not paying taxes and likely does not have insurance. Equally suspicious is a contractor who demands daily payments. That is an invitation to an unfinished job.

The contractor doesn't seem professional. For example, if the company name is not painted on the contractor's truck or if the business lacks a website, the person might not really have a business. Real contractors typically have their license number visible on their truck.

If the contractor quotes you an informal estimate without taking measurements or calculating the cost of materials and labor, they're probably not legit. ■

WOOD COUNTY ELECTRIC CO-OP

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an
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DOWNLOAD THE APP

Search for MY WCEC

in the App Store or

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ABOUT WOOD COUNTY EC

Founded in 1938, WCEC owns and maintains more than 5,140 miles of line to provide electric service to over 38,000 meters in parts of nine counties: Camp, Franklin, Hopkins, Rains, Smith, Titus, Upshur, Van Zandt and Wood counties.

MEMBER BENEFITS AND SERVICES

- Online account access and bill payment
- Paperless E-Bill services
- Free bill-paying app
- Visa, Mastercard and Discover accepted
- SmartPower prepaid electric system
- Scholarships and youth programs
- Safety and energy conservation programs
- Operation Round-Up community grants

MY WCEC

Your cooperative, in the palm of your hand, our free app gives account access 24/7. See usage graphs, get alerts, estimate upcoming bills, pay your bill and quickly report outages. Free in the App Store and Google Play, search for My WCEC and download.

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wcec.org





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A Slice of the Sweet Life

At Ganny's in Winnsboro, 'pie precedes everything'

ONE DAY WHEN Georgia Goggans was still a child and her mother wasn't well enough to make dessert, young Georgia took it upon herself to bake a chocolate meringue pie. She had watched her mom often enough, she figured, so started the pie from scratch. But to her dismay, the filling did not thicken.

Disheartened, she went to her mom's bedside and told her about the failure. Together, they determined that little Goggans, who couldn't even read yet, had used baking powder instead of cornstarch. After a do-over with the correct ingredient, Goggans made her first pie.

That sweet success became a defining moment in her life.

Today—many years later—Ganny's Pie Shop in Winnsboro is about as good as it gets. And its proprietor Georgia Goggans—many, many pies later—is about as real as it gets.

Ganny's offers 90 varieties of homemade pies, including cream, custard, fruit, chess, freezer and nut pies, many of which are topped with fluffy meringues, buttery crumbles or flaky crusts. The shop also offers a variety of icebox pie that Goggans calls "foo-foo" pies. There is also a wide selection of gluten-free, sugar-free and low-carb options called bliss pies.

Goggans—who was dubbed Ganny by her grandson, Kane—has been making sweet treats nearly all her life. She was born into a farming family in Bovina, a fly-speck of a town near Lubbock. Her mother was a typical farm wife of the time, homemaking for her husband and five children, until she became ill. Then the kids stepped in.

Goggans' older sister Connie took over most of the cleaning tasks, and Goggans, who had a knack for cooking even at a very



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1. Baker and cookbook author Georgia Goggans has been making pies since she was a young girl.

2. Ganny's offers a diverse selection of pies.

3. Ganny's Pie Shop sits on a hill just outside of Winnsboro on Highway 37.



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young age, started preparing food.

After graduation from high school in 1976, Goggans worked at a local golf club, where she met a man named Glenn that same year. A month later they married. They ended up raising two boys, Heath and Gary, and were married 43 years, until Glenn died in 2020. Through all those years, Glenn remained a strong supporter of Goggans' pie baking.

In 1994 the couple moved to Winnsboro to be near Glenn's mother. He worked in the propane business while Goggans worked at a pharmacy, but her long-held dream was to open a pie shop. Glenn encouraged her and worked hard to make it happen. She started selling pies at First Monday Trade Days on the Mountain in Canton and earned a loyal following. She left the pharmacy in 2011 and rented a building in Winnsboro for her first full-time pie shop.

Then in 2016 a little yellow building just outside of town caught her eye. "Every time I drove past, that building seemed to talk to me," she said. "It would say, 'Hello. Don't I look like

your next pie shop?'" With those thoughts ringing in her head, she bought the building and hung her sign for Ganny's Pie Shop, where the motto is, "Pie precedes everything."

For 10 years Goggans offered lunch specials with her pies. And aside from occasional help from her grandchildren Kaci and Kane, she did all the work herself, and it kept her extremely busy. But recently she decided to slow down and retire the lunch program to focus on what she loves best—baking pies. Though sometimes she offers a few other sweets as well, such as Granny Bert's teacakes and the occasional batch of cookies and banana or sweet potato bread, when inspiration strikes.

Goggans also takes preorders for savory pies like chicken pot pies and quiches, though she doesn't call them that. "I'm like my Granny Bert, and she always called them breakfast pies, which is as fancy as I am going to get," Goggans said.

When time and energy permit, she also makes a few preordered takeout casseroles. But, Goggans warns, if a customer calls for something else and she has a lot pie orders to



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1. Goggans, left, delivers an order to a happy customer.

2. Zack and Kayla Oliver were passing by when they saw “pie” on the sign and stopped in. They selected an Almond Joy pie to make their trip sweeter.



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Ganny's Pie Shop

6018 N. Highway 37,
Winnsboro 75494

Phone: (903) 243-0992
gannypieshop@yahoo.com

Hours: Open 8 a.m.–2 p.m.
Closed Thursday and Sunday.

Follow on Facebook for specials
and announcements.

fill, “Pie will precede!”

From start to finish, Goggans’ pies take about 75 minutes to reach the cooling rack. If you call ahead, chances are good you’ll have a pie the same day—even if it’s an old-timey variety like rhubarb or burnt caramel. But be warned: On holidays, Goggans books up fast, so call well in advance. For example, orders for Thanksgiving, her busiest time of year, close November 15 to allow time to buy all the fresh ingredients for custom and wholesale orders.

Those overwhelmed by the 90 different pie varieties on offer at Ganny’s may want to start simply with the shop’s bestseller, the chocolate meringue, which also happens to be Goggans’ favorite to make. Other front-runners include coconut meringue, pecan, fudge pecan, apple, peach and rhubarb. For fruit pies, customers can choose between a lattice top and crumble top. And if they have a special request, they can just ask.

Goggans is not only an expert piemaker but also a pie ambassador. She’d like nothing more than to bake a pie for you, but

she’d just as soon teach you how to make your own through her cookbook, *It’s Pie Time*. In the book’s more than 100 pages of recipes and pie wisdom, you’ll find tips and tricks that only an expert would know, such as how to prevent meringue pies from weeping and building up beads of moisture. Goggans also gives the recipe for a no-fail homemade crust, which she says is the foundation of any good pie. To buy a copy, just visit the shop.

Goggans lives her life like she makes her pies. She is sweet, colorful and down to earth.

“I am the most real person you will meet,” she said. “What you see is exactly what I am, and I’m the very same whoever I am with.”

And that applies to her customers, she said, whether they are ordering 100 pies or just one. “Every single one of them will get the same amount of sarcasm, too.” ■

Add Energy Efficiency to Your Thanksgiving Menu

IT TAKES A LOT of energy to cook all day and to host a house full of company for Thanksgiving. So while you're making your grocery list this holiday season, start a list of ways you and your family can cut down on energy use.

Some ideas:

Lower the thermostat. If you're cooking all day, your kitchen will get really hot. Some of that heat will spill into the rest of the house, so there's no need to keep the thermostat at its usual setting.

Don't turn your oven on until it's full. Cook several dishes at once. If their recommended cooking temps are within 25 degrees of each other in either direction, everything will cook as it should.

Identify dishes that you can cook in the microwave, which heats food faster than the oven and uses about a third of the electricity.

Run your dishwasher only when it's full. Using the dishwasher uses less energy and water than hand-washing.

Cool leftovers on the counter before putting them into the refrigerator. That will keep the fridge from having to work so hard to cool off hot food. But don't leave perishable food out for more than a few hours, after which it begins to spoil.

Use a slow cooker, toaster oven or warming plate to do the same job of cooking some dishes but with less electricity. The average toaster oven can use about half the energy of the average electric stove over the same cooking time.

Make sure your stovetop is in good condition. For your stovetop to function effectively, it's important that the metal reflectors under your electric burners stay clean.

Ensure your pots and pans are in good shape. If your pans have warped over time and don't sit flat on the burner, it may be time for some new ones that ensure heat transfers efficiently from the burner to the pan. ■



Have a Flame-Free Thanksgiving

THANKSGIVING IS a prime day for kitchen fires, and the U.S. Fire Administration reports that more than 4,000 fires occur on the holiday.

Increased activity in cooking areas and a whole host of distractions can lead to the holiday going down in flames.

For a safe Thanksgiving, remember:

- ▶ Do not leave food cooking or the stove unsupervised.
- ▶ Make sure smoke alarms work.
- ▶ Don't leave candles burning unattended or burn them near flammable items. LED candles are a safe alternative.
- ▶ Follow all directions for using a deep fryer, including never putting a frozen or partially frozen turkey in hot oil, and never leave the fryer unattended.
- ▶ Keep matches, lighters and candles out of the reach of children.
- ▶ Make sure electrical cords to kitchen appliances such as toaster ovens, coffee makers and mixers stay dry and don't melt in contact with heat.
- ▶ Plug kitchen electrical appliances into outlets protected with ground-fault circuit interrupters. ■

