

DOWN HOME

Summer 2024

south texas



**ADVENTURES ON THE ROAD
WITH BERNARDO GARCIA**



Dave Shabaz
PUBLISHER

Welcome to Down Home South Texas Magazine!

Thank you so much for picking up a copy of our second edition of Down Home South Texas Magazine.

Our first ever issue came out in March of this year and our new quarterly lifestyle magazine went over better than I could have ever imagined. The readers here in DeWitt County have told me that we needed a magazine like this and it warms my heart to know that it was received so well. We will continue to write stories and highlight happenings in DeWitt County, Texas and I'm happy that more advertisers have come on board to help support this new endeavor. I hope everyone has a safe and happy summer and we will see you again in September!



ON THE COVER

Bernardo Garcia

Photo by: Javier Gonzalez

Down Home South Texas is a publication of The Cuero Record & Yorktown News-View and is published four times per year.

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ON THE ROAD WITH BERNARDO GARCIA

Cyclist at home on highways.



BBQ OVEN BAKED RIBS

Recipe from Janie Hill.



APPLE ACE HARDWARE

Apple Ace Hardware & Lumber in Yorktown



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*You can go
forever.*
-Bernardo Garcia





Road goes on forever

Cyclist at home on highways

Story by: Virginia Gilstrap

Photos by: Javier Gonzalez

As you hit the road this summer, you may well pass brightly clad cyclist Bernardo Garcia, 79, out for a quick 25-, 40-, 60- or 90-mile sprint. Surely, such a rider would have a long career on the road behind him. In Garcia's case, however, cycling only became his passion four years ago. It was his career as a civil engineer that saw him building roads, as well as other structures, for decades.

In Garcia's job as Hillsborough County (Florida) assistant administrator, he oversaw million-dollar budgets and the maintenance of hundreds of miles of roads.

"I designed roads that took over 600,000 vehicles a day," Garcia said. "I knew the specs."

One of the publications he authored on asset management described a predictive, proactive approach to road maintenance developed by his department. This contrasted to many road maintenance departments working on a reactive basis after problems arise.

Garcia honed his engineering design skills as a captain in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam era. He headed projects to build a dam in New Mexico and a missile silo in Germany, among many others after his military service and work with the Corp of Civil Engineers.

When Garcia caught the riding bug after retiring for good in 2019, he felt the most secure on major highways because he knew they were a higher degree of road.

"I started selecting roads with higher engineering standards," he said. He had pulled an old bike out of his garage and tried a local trail for a couple of miles. The next day he completed four miles and each day kept doubling it until he got to 20 miles.

"I can do this!" he told himself and became a dedicated cyclist, transferring his passion from landscaping the gardens in his Florida yard to pedaling the highways.

"You can go forever," Garcia said.

From Florida, he took his bike for an extended stay with his brother in Ohio, and the habit stuck with him. He pedaled in the snow as much as

Cyclist Bernardo Garcia, 79, pedals over the Highway 77 bridge.



he had in the heat.

Garcia credits his work ethic to growing up in a large farming family, near San Antonio, that worked together to bail hay and harvest crops. His family has deep roots and a long history of farming and ranching in Texas. When he came back to Texas in 2022, he settled in his 35-foot, fully loaded RV in Aransas Pass. From there he could safely bike on the shoulders of highways 35, 37, and 181, which allowed him to bypass towns and easily make up to a 90-mile round trip a day.

“You see cows and dogs and donkeys,” he said, “get to know them, even talk to them.”

By this time, Garcia had upgraded his bike to a carbon frame, 35-speed bike and added equipment such as a radar and GPS. His bright bikewear is also pressurized clothing that helps with circulation. Though Garcia’s doctor says his biological age is about 55, he has had major health issues. But his extensive work in gardening kept him healthy and active until taking it up several notches with cycling.

After two years of rides along the coast, ranging from East Texas to the Valley, Garcia moved inland and now resides and rides in the Crossroads area. His highways of choice these days are 77, 87 and 183, but you can also see him strolling Cuero’s Main Street to grab a beer or an ice cream and chat with new friends.

He doesn’t like to compete very much because it’s mostly “weekenders,” who don’t train seriously and can unknowingly cause accidents. Competitions are the only time he wears cleats, and his foot stays in the pedal to get the most traction. But stopping is also harder because the foot cannot separate from the pedal.



“A lot of times I would have to find a place to put it down, like in a ditch, to avoid a worse crash,” Garcia said. “Things happen so quickly. You have to be totally focused.”

As for falls, he’s had a few and shrugs them off, listing the cuts and bruises here and there. He smiles sheepishly as he also shrugs off the times he’s been stranded. “Yeah, there’s flats and cramping,” he said.

“Dehydration is part of it,” Garcia said. “And the heat. People think you just drink water, but you have to find some shade, a little tree limb to get under. You have to bring your body temperature down.”

Garcia recalls when his leg was cramping on a ride near Portland, and he pushed on for 15 miles but couldn’t go any further. He was 10 miles from home and stopped at a convenience store, where he offered a guy with a truck \$20 to drive him home. The man declined and drove off.

“But he turned around and came back,” Garcia said. “He said he didn’t know why said ‘no’ because he needed the money.”

He said if no trucks come by, he’ll knock on a door to ask for a ride. Mostly he calls his new friends from the RV park if he gets stranded, which they do just to hear Garcia’s latest adventure “on the road.”





A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF CUERO

Hello my fellow Cueroites,

I was once told by a general officer I worked for, "Chief, you are the world's greatest cheerleader."

These words resonate with me every day as I meet with everyday folks trying to better their lives and the lives of those around them. I love Cuero, Texas. We are resilient, compassionate and hard-working folks. Almost one month into my tenure, I am still trying to establish my routine.

Meetings, meetings and more meetings: trips to the Texas Department of Transportation/Aviation division in Austin, getting educated on airport operations processes, gathering information to make informed decisions. Meet and greet with the area's mayors. I like to put a face to a name. I attended Memorial Day ceremonies in the local area and the Chisholm Trail (Great Reveal). On Friday, May 31st, I participated in a Cuero Development Corporation retreat with the Board of Directors. I was impressed at the determination by the board to improve/attract economic opportunities for/to Cuero. On Saturday, June 1st, I was honored to assist as a canopy bearer for Father Jacob and the Eucharist in the Corpus Christi procession from Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Michael's Catholic Church. The candlelight adoration at the church was beautiful. My faith keeps me grounded.

I am actively gathering information on youth council programs in the area. I would love to get our youth involved in their/our community. Our community's youth are the future leaders and decision makers. The more prepared they are, the better for

the community. I am Youth oriented if you haven't figured it out yet. I believe the community who invests in their youth will gain great dividends in the future. A theater, bowling alley, skating rink are missing today. Therefore monies which could stay in Cuero are going to other sources. Investment in our youth will improve adult lives. More to come!

Many events are scheduled this summer. Some events are monthly, some are one time or infrequent. However you must seek them out. Please visit the websites to the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Cuero Main Street, the museums, the library (Staycation activities). These sources and activity planners are hardworking dedicated folks who love and care for our community. Please attend or volunteer in making these events a huge success, so we don't lose them. Visit the City of Cuero website to get informed on City of Cuero happenings.

I am so honored to work with a hardworking and caring city staff and Council.

Thank you to all who have stopped me and wished me well in my endeavors or provided me with feedback to share with the City Council. As I stated before, seven people (Council) make decisions which may affect you based on the information provided to them by staff, citizens or self-research. God Bless You and Your Families!!!

Emil Garza, Mayor, City of Cuero

Cuero Community Events



Chamber of Commerce
Agriculture & Visitor's Bureau

June

June 29th: Cuero Regional Hospital Men's Health Golf Tournament 18 hole tournament
Contact Tamar Kainer 361-275-6191



June 29th: 7pm-11:30pm Rally with Ruby
Downtown Cuero Main Street
Free Street Dance, Turkey Race, food & beverage vendors, Live Entertainment by VHS!

July

July 4th: 4 - 10pm Cuero City Park
Cuero Celebrates the 4th of July, Car show, food vendor, live music, kids parade, free splash pad & pool, live music by Matt Thigpen & Dave Williams and fireworks!



July 6th: 10am - 1pm VFW Hall
Annual Touch A Truck, Free event for kids and families
For more information, email dcwb.fdcc@gmail.com



July 24th: Chamber Networking Mixer
Bingo, Burgers & Beer 5:30-7:30 Cuero Country Club
Enjoy a fun evening of networking, delicious burgers & fun games of bingo

July 26th: 7pm - 10pm The Venue on Church St.
DeWitt County Medical Foundation Dueling Pianos
"Summer Weekend Wind Down"
Talented musicians dueling it out on pianos
call 361-524-6103 to reserve your table or purchase a ticket.



July 27th: 9am - 1pm Downtown Farmer's Market on Main
Enjoy shopping fresh produce, Artisan crafts, baked goods and hand crafted items under the shade of the Main Street Pavilion

August



August 2nd: 7pm - 11:30pm The Venue on Church Street
Cuero Chamber of Commerce Casino Night Fundraiser
Enjoy an evening of Vegas Style gaming and slots followed by live music and dancing with Stephanie Ross and The Southern Drive Band tickets can be purchased at cuero.org or at the chamber 210 E Main, Suite A Call 361-275-2112 for more information.

August 3rd: 11:30am - 6pm The Venue on Church Street
Cuero Chamber of Commerce WSOC Texas Hold'em & Shopper's Poker Run annual fundraiser \$5,000 Cash Value Grand Prize and payouts to the top 10 winners! Delicious catered meal by Werner's, spirits throughout the day, 50/50 raffles and gun draws. Main Event is \$100 Chipup \$50 purchase tickets online at cuero.org or call the chamber @ 361-275-2112 for more information!



August 24th: 9am - 1pm Downtown Farmer's Market on Main
Enjoy shopping fresh produce, Artisan crafts, baked goods and hand crafted items under the shade of the Main Street Pavilion

September



September 18th : Chamber Networking Mixer
Pizza, Puzzles & Pints 5:30-7:30 Cuero Country Club
Enjoy a fun evening of networking and a puzzle tournament



September 25th : 11am - 2pm The Venue on Church St.
Chamber Women in Business Luncheon
Hear from Women leaders in Business and a panel of local women owned small business owners
Contact the Cuero Chamber for more information.

KIDS' JULY CALENDAR

MONDAY, JULY 1 -

Craft Camp| RSVP 50 max (Friendship Bracelets), 3 p.m. Cuero library **Ages: 6-11**

TUESDAY, JULY 2 -

Family Story Time, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 3 -

Wild Things Zoofari, 10 a.m., Yorktown Public Library

THURSDAY, JULY 4TH -

Fourth Of July Celebration In The Park. Free Admission To The Pool & Splash Pad From 4 - 8 p.m.; Lakefront Fireworks Start @ 9 p.m.

SATURDAY, JULY 6 -

Touch-A-Truck, Friends of DeWitt County Children, 10 a.m., Cuero VFW

MONDAY, JULY 8 -

Craft Camp | RSVP 50 max (Trust Texas Bank), 3 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

TUESDAY, JULY 9 -

Family Story Time, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 -

Texas Snake Man, 10 a.m., Yorktown Public Library

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 -

Comedy Magician, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10 -

Mid-Coast Craft, 4:30 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

THURSDAY, JULY 11 -

Lego Lab (Treasure map), 3-4 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

THURSDAY, JULY 11 -

ESL Class, 6-7:30 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

FRIDAY, JULY 12 -

Teen Cuisine w/ AgriLife Extension | RSVP 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Cuero Library, **Ages: 12-18**

FRIDAY, JULY 12 -

Movies (Barbie), 2 p.m. Cuero library, **Ages: PG-13**

FRIDAY, JULY 12 -

Movie Night In The Park. The Little Mermaid (Pg) 9 p.m. @ The Parks Knoll

SATURDAY, JULY 13 -

Come and go craft, 9 a.m. to noon; Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

SATURDAY, JULY 13 -

Scavenger Hunt, 9 a.m. - noon, Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

MONDAY, JULY 15 -

Craft Camp | RSVP 50 max (String Art), 3 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

TUESDAY, JULY 16 -

Family Story Time, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17 -

Illusions by Blake, 10 a.m., Yorktown Public Library

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17 -

Happy Tails, 11:30 a.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 5+**

THURSDAY, JULY 18 -

Texas Zoo Presentation At The 201 Leonard Harmon Dr. 10 a.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 18 -

Lego Lab (Space Ship), 3-4 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

FRIDAY, JULY 19 -

Teen Cuisine w/ AgriLife Extension | RSVP, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages 12-18**

FRIDAY, JULY 19 -

Movie (Transformers: Rise Of The Beasts), 2 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: PG-13**

SATURDAY, JULY 20 -

Come and go craft, 9 a.m.-noon, Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

SATURDAY, JULY 20 -

Scavenger Hunt, 9 a.m.-noon, Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

MONDAY, JULY 22 -

Craft Camp| RSVP 50 max (3D Canvas), 3 p.m., library, **Ages: 6-11**

TUESDAY, JULY 23 -

Family Story Time, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24 -

End of Summer Party, 10 a.m., Yorktown Public Library

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24 -

Bonzo Crunch, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: ALL**

THURSDAY, JULY 25 -

Lego Lab (Binoculars), 3-4 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

THURSDAY, JULY 25 -

Teen Anime Club, 4 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 13-18**

THURSDAY, JULY 25 -

Craft Chics Class, 6 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 19+**

THURSDAY, JULY 25 -

Yoga In The Park! Join Black-

bird Yoga For A Fun Filled Kid-Friendly Yoga Session Under The Basketball Pavilion @ 9:30 a.m.

FRIDAY, JULY 26 -

Movies (Wish), 2 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: PG**

FRIDAY, JULY 26 -

Movie Night In The Park, The Little Rascals (Pg) 9:00 p.m. At The Parks Knoll

SATURDAY, JULY 27 -

Come and go craft, 9 a.m.-noon, Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

SATURDAY, JULY 27 -

Scavenger Hunt, 9 a.m.-noon, Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

MONDAY, JULY 29 -

Craft Camp | RSVP 50 max (Tie Dye Shirts), 3 p.m., Cuero library, **Ages: 6-11**

TUESDAY, JULY 30 -

Family Story Time, 10 a.m., 201 Leonard Harmon Dr., **Ages: 0-5**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 31 -

End of Summer Bash, 10 a.m., Cuero library, **Ages: ALL**

THURSDAY, AUGUST 1 -

Free Admission @ The Pool & Splash Pad. Splash Pad Hours: 10 a.m. -7 p.m. Pool Hours: noon-7:00p.m.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 9 -

Movie Night In The Park - Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire (Pg-13) 9:00 p.m. @ The Parks Knoll

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VOL. 130 • No. 17 • USPS 781 - 120

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DEWITT BRIEFS

Reception for Departing Mayor

Please join the City of Cuero in honoring Mayor Sara Post Meyer and her 14 years of service at a Come-and-Go Reception on May 16th at the Chisholm Trail Heritage Museum from 4-6 pm. Refreshments will be provided. Remarks begin at 4:30.

Westhoff ISD Spring Festival

The Westhoff ISD Spring festival will be held May 4 from 11AM-2PM. Pre-sale BBQ Chicken plates \$10.00. Live auction begins at noon. For more information call: 830-236-5519.

Annual Dec Sunday Ser

The Rabke United Methodist Church, FM DeWitt County, Annual Decon Service on May 12. Pot Luck Lunch on the church grounds at 12:00 noon and service will begin at 1:00 pm. A short service at the

Whittington drafted by LA Rams

By: Dave Shabaz
Photo courtesy of:
Texasasports.com



Jordan Whittington

On Saturday, April 27, a Gobbler became a Ram. Cuero High School graduate Jordan Whittington was selected in the 6th round, 213th overall in the 2024 NFL Draft by the Los Angeles Rams. This caps off an amazing amateur career for Whittington, who shined as a

Cuero Gobbler and Texas Longhorn.

Whittington's selection is even more impressive because this year's draft included a long list of talented wide receivers. The Longhorns had three wide receivers drafted and there were 35 total wide receivers taken in this year's draft.

Whittington has always been known as a "workhorse" wherever

he's played and he now gets the opportunity to learn from two of the NFL's best wide receivers, Cooper Kupp and Puka Nacua.

Jordan's Dad, Quincey stated, "Jordan was getting impatient and I told him to sit and relax, that it was in God's hands, and then the phone rang." He said Jordan was grinning from ear to ear and when he hung up the call he said, "it's

the LA Rams!!" Quincey said that Jordan had his Uncle Arthur's #22 Raiders jersey on the couch next to him and wouldn't allow anyone to sit there while he waited to hear his name called. Jordan said, "I wish Uncle Arthur was here to see this." Arthur, who also played in the NFL, passed away five days earlier, but I'm sure everyone there felt his presence.



Area school thefts investigated

Virginia S. Gilstrap,
Reporter/Managing
Editor

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR OF YORKTOWN



Good Day Yorktown,

Summer is upon us and, wow, has it been hot and humid already!

We have begun a very successful summer here in Yorktown with a movie night as well as Rev Up in Motion events in the park. We also have had Little League games, school activities, various library related events and there are many more fun happenings on the calendar.

As always, we encourage your frequenting the local businesses in town as we want to do anything and everything we can to support our community.

Please be careful as you endure the heat this summer, and don't forget to wave and tell your neighbor hello. Let's all be proud of our small community.

Bill Baker, Mayor, City of Yorktown



Around the County...

UPCOMING EVENTS IN DEWITT COUNTY

Yorktown, Texas

Happenings in Yorktown

Yorktown Chamber: 141 S Riedel St., Yorktown • 361-564-2661

www.yorktowntx.com/chamber-of-commerce

July

- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - July 12, 26

August

- Back to School Bash
- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - August 9, 23

September

- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - Sept 6, 20

October

- Yorktown Western Days the 3rd FULL Weekend in October
- Trunt-or-Treat on October 31st
- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - October 4, 18

November

- Veteran's Day program with YISD students, Local Business Punch Card Promotion
- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - November 1, 15, 29

December

- Christmas with Santa - 1st Thursday of December
- Majestic Lights
- Homemade Cajun plates at D'Zo Mercantile: 143 East Main Street, Yorktown - December 13, 27

Steer clear of extreme heat

Story by: **Virginia Gilstrap**

On Memorial Day – with the temperature high of 97 degrees and 75% humidity – the heat index in the Crossroads area was 116 degrees, according to Maclovio Perez Jr., Newscenter 25 chief meteorologist. Unfortunately, the scorcher was more likely a preview of the increased number of dangerously hot days this summer rather than a freak heat spell.

“The earth is definitely in a warming trend,” Perez said. “And communities are going to have to learn how to deal with heat.”

According to the World Health Organization, heat stress is the leading cause of weather-related deaths. Most of the deaths occur in Asia and Europe, but since 2000 the heat-related mortality rate of people 65 and older has increased 85%.

Heat stress can result in heat cramps and rashes, heat exhaustion and heat stroke, according to the Centers for Disease Control.

The human body temperature is feverish at 102 degrees and needs close monitoring. At more than 105 degrees, it’s a serious risk. When the heat index temperature is 105 degrees, sweat no longer evaporates, which is the cooling mechanism for the body.

“This is no laughing matter,” Perez said. “People could succumb, and localities should start making plans to allow people to come in and cool down.”

DeWitt County Office of Emergency Management Coordinator Billy Jordan said he is creating a local situational awareness (sitrep) that will be posted on the department’s social media page. His office will also send sitreps to local churches and other sources throughout the county.

Jordan encourages medically fragile individuals to register with the State of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry, also known as STEAR, which alerts health officials to people needing extra assistance. He said people need to re-register each year, so the EMS knows who to check on after emergency events.

People vulnerable to heat stress include the very young, the very old, pregnant women, those with sub-par cooling, those stranded outdoors and outdoor workers. Perez said outdoor workers are often acclimated to heat and are a less risk than those not acclimated to it.

A free app called OSHA NIOSH can give location-specific heat indexes to help assess risks.

Perez said he worries about individuals who may be dizzy or nauseous and not even realize it could be heat related. He urges his audience to respect the heat, take precautions and check on neighbors and friends who may be vulnerable to its effects.

Who knows, finding ways to beat the heat together might lead to summertime adventures in coolness.





Meteorologists Scott Pitney, left, and Maclovio Perez, right, snap a selfie outside the Newscenter 25 studio. Local weather forecasts provide important warnings of heat indices that could impact the community

Photo courtesy of James Munoz

BBQ Oven Baked Ribs

By: **JANIE HILL**

INGREDIENTS:

2 racks pork ribs about 6 lbs (We cooked 8 lbs.)
1 jar barbecue sauce <https://butteryourbiscuit.com/homemade-bbq-sauce>
(I did not use this recipe.)

DRY RUB: (MADE 1 ½ TIMES THIS AMOUNT)

½ cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon chili powder
2 teaspoon cumin
2 tablespoons smoked paprika
1-2 teaspoons cayenne pepper depending on the heat level you like
(I forgot to buy this item so the rub was made without it.)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 275 degrees
2. In a small bowl mix dry rub until combined and set aside
3. Rinse pork ribs and pat dry with paper towels
4. Remove the membrane from the back of the ribs. Link: butteryourbiscuit.com
5. Spread the dry rub all over the ribs making sure to cover both sides.
6. Wrap ribs tightly in foil meat side up, and place on a baking sheet.
7. Bake for 3 hours for spare ribs, 2 hours for baby back ribs, or until fork tender
8. Open the foil and drain the liquid from the ribs.
9. Brush your favorite barbecue sauce on the ribs, and broil for 5 minutes.
10. Remove and let the ribs rest for 5-10 minutes before cutting. Serves 4-6

I needed the ribs to be done before the suggested time, so I set the oven temperature at 300 degrees, but lowered the cooking time to 2 hours 30 minutes. If you cook the ribs at the recipe temperature of 275 degrees, I would check the ribs after 2 hours 30 minutes to 2 hours 40 minutes.

FOR THE BARBECUE SAUCE:

1 ½ c. ketchup
1 tsp. kosher salt
1 c. packed brown sugar
½ tsp. garlic powder
½ c. water
½ tsp. onion powder
¼ c. apple cider vinegar
¼ tsp. ground mustard
1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
¼ tsp. paprika
1 Tbsp. molasses

Meanwhile make barbecue sauce: In a medium saucepan over medium heat, combine all sauce ingredients together. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and let simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, 1 hour.



When it comes to ribs, my husband knows how much I love them! In fact, he cooked some for me not long ago. They happen to be my "go-to" item when dining at Cheddar's and I have wanted to find a recipe that can be done in the oven since it's not always convenient to build a fire in the barbecue pit.

This recipe was selected for the ingredients in the dry rub. I also took a stab at making some barbecue sauce. The ribs and the sauce were prepared for and approved by my family over the Memorial Day weekend. Fresh green beans along with "Poor Man's Potato Salad" (as my mom calls it) served as the sides for our holiday meal. I hope you'll enjoy both the ribs and the sauce!





Apple Lumber



Names from left: Crystal Ingram, Lorri Schroeder, Kim Farrow, Laura Chalk, and Beth Luke. Not shown, Rene Metting

Everything is wonderful when you have women like these!

CRAFTSMAN

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JoLeah Gonzales, Owner
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15 THINGS ABOUT ANNEMARIE LESLIE-MEES

Boys and Girls Club of Cuero Unit Director / The EVThing founder and gelato creator

Are you the youngest, middle, oldest or only child?

I am the youngest of 3 children.

What is your favorite quote?

It's difficult to choose one, so here are two that resonate with me the most:

"And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it." ~Roald Dahl

"We have two lives, and the second one begins when we realize we only have one." ~Confucius

What is number one on your bucket list?

Seeing the Sistine Chapel in Vatican City.

What is your biggest pet peeve?

A person cracking/popping their neck—Lauren Leslie-Mees!!!

What skill would you like to master?

Singing... and lip reading, and moonwalking.

If you could trade places with anyone for one week, who would it be?

Taylor Swift—to be a famous entrepreneur and to perform on stage would be a great adventure.

Who is your hero?

Winnie The Pooh—above all else, to be happy in all that you do, to laugh and giggle while facing daily trials and tribulations with the love and support of good friends and family helping you along the way. What more could you ask for in a hero?

Where do you see yourself in five years?

In a villa on the Amalfi coast, wink wink!

Financially secure lol, of course! Might take a bit longer than 5 years.

But actually I hope to be celebrating my children's accomplishments, and watching our business thrive

What is something that you've always wanted to do, but have never tried?

Snow skiing and acting.

Would you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert?

I'm an introverted extrovert, or an extroverted introvert; whichever you prefer.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

There are 3—Rhett, Lauren, and Max.

What do you think is the most essential professional skill?

Good Communication.

If you had a warning label, what would it say?

Warning—Contents will explode if agitated or heated.

If money wasn't an object, what would you do all day?

Experience new things with my children and loved ones.

Volunteer everywhere, travel, read, paint, discuss everything with different types of people, share, write, bask in the glow of the day, meditate, exercise, swim, play, live, BE!

If you could share a meal with four individuals, living or dead, who would they be?

Robin Williams, Edgar Allen Poe, Michelangelo, Sonya (my sister).



A company with a long name and longer history of giving

Story by: Dave Shabaz

Photos by: Record Staff

Hochheim Prairie Farm Mutual Insurance, Branch 2 in Cuero is a company with a very long name and an even longer history of community giving. The company was created in 1892 by a small group of Hochheim farmers. Approximately 20-25 of them decided they needed to get together to help protect their farms and homes. Now, I know what you might already be thinking, “oh great, here’s another story about an insurance company.” Nope, not even close. This is a story about community giving and how a small group of people can create something that positively affects thousands of people in their community.

Hochheim Prairie Insurance is a Texas only company and they have branch offices, one of which is in Cuero. Their home office is located in Yoakum, Texas and as of this year, there are 753 policy holders in the DeWitt County branch office. This is significant because the history of giving, both old and current, is based on the members. In 1993 they decided to ask their members to give \$5 per policyholder, per year to go towards community donations. Their members meet once a year, every February and vote on many different items and every three years, they hold officer elections. These officers are volunteers and do not sell anyone insurance, they just donate their time and energy to help their community. In 2021, the members voted to double their donation amounts to \$10 per policyholder and in 2024 alone, they will donate \$8,800 dollars to DeWitt County charities. Since 1993 when they began their community donations, they have donated an estimated \$130,000 to local charities, simply from these small \$5 and \$10 a year member donations.

In 2024, Branch #2, here in Cuero has 21 community donations. Here are just some of the groups that they have helped: They currently sponsor three youth teams, one Little League team, one soccer team and one team in the Little Dribblers basketball league. They’ve also donated to:



A \$300 community donation was given to the Boys & Girls Club from Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2. Representing the Boys & Girls Club are on the left: Annemarie Leslie-Mees and Megan Boehl. Representing Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2 and presenting the check is: Ronnie Dietz, President and Cathy Hurta, Secretary/Treasurer



A \$500 community donation was given to the C.A.M.A.L House from Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2. Representing Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2, on the left are: Ronnie Dietz, President and Cathy Hurta, Secretary/Treasurer, Emily Halbert, Executive Director of C.A.M.A.L House, Jennifer Koudelka, Asst. Director and Janis Ford, Administrative Support/Volunteer.



\$150 Community Donation to the DeWitt County Historical Commission. Representing the Historical Commission, L to R: Carol Martin, Treasurer, Peggy Ledbetter, Chair. Representing HP Branch 2, Cathy Hurta, Secretary/Treasurer, Ronnie Dietz, President, and John Garoni, Vice-President.



\$500 Community Donation to the Cuero VFD. Representing HP Branch 2, L to R: Ronnie Dietz, President, Cathy Hurta, Secretary/Treasurer, John Garoni, Vice-President. Representing the Cuero VFD, Craig Oaks, Chief, Cory McKush, Lt. CFD, Clint Morris, Captain CFD and Cade Netherlain, FF CFD.



Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2 in Cuero recently awarded a \$500 scholarship to four Cuero High School seniors. Pictured from Left to Right: Representing Hochheim Prairie, Ronnie Dietz, President, Hannah Dolan, Fallon Whitt, Mason Notaro, Truitt Luddeke and Cathy Hurta, Secretary-Treasurer of Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2.

The Boys & Girls Club, CAMAL House, Cuero Livestock Show, Keep Cuero Beautiful, six DeWitt County Volunteer Fire Departments, Pet Adoptions of Cuero, DeWitt County Historical Commission and most recently they gave four scholarships to four very deserving Cuero High School Seniors. They've also given to Blue Santa, Deputy Santa and they donate to Cuero ISD to help them provide school supplies to those children in need.

The officers who donate their time and energy on behalf of Hochheim Prairie, Branch #2 are: Ronnie Dietz, President, John Garoni, Vice-President, and Cathy Hurta, who serves as Secretary/Treasurer. You will regularly see photos of them donating checks to worthwhile organizations such as these in the local newspaper, The Cuero Record. You've probably wondered why they are in the newspaper so often, well, this is the reason. Small \$5 and \$10 yearly donations have helped all of the people you see in the various photos. It would take up an entire magazine to show all of the community members that Hochheim Prairie, Branch #2 has helped here in DeWitt County, but thank God for organizations such as theirs and for the people who choose to give in order to help others.



Pet Adoptions of Cuero receives \$200. In front, representing PAOC, L to R: Nelda huber, Linda Anzaldua, and Pat Kennedy. In back, representing Hochheim Prairie Branch 2, L to R: John Garoni, Vice President; Ronnie Dietz, President; and Cathy Hurta, Secretary/ Treasurer.



A \$300 team sponsorship for Cuero Little League from Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2 in Cuero. Pictured L-R, Ronnie Dietz - Branch 2 President, Sharold Garrett - Little League Board Member, Cathy Hurta - Branch 2 Secretary/Treasurer, Janie Hill, Little League President, John Garoni - Branch 2 Vice President.



A \$250 Community Donation to Cuero Livestock Show from Hochheim Prairie Insurance Branch 2 in Cuero. Pictured L-R, Ronnie Dietz - Branch 2 President, Cathy Hurta - Branch 2 Secretary/Treasurer, John Garoni - Branch 2 Vice President, Greg Gossett - Cuero Livestock Show President, Leo Heinemann - Past President Cuero Livestock Show, Denise Goebel, AgriLife County Extension Agent-FCH, Pam Ficklen - AgriLife Extension Office Manager, Anthony Netardus - AgriLife County Extension Agent-AG.



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Here's an Apple You Should Pick



Sitting on the truck Left to Right: Kim Farrow, Elizabeth Gonzales, Melissa Garcia, Jeff Klein, Travis Weiss, Joyce Hoefling (deceased), Patrick Weise.
Standing Left to Right: Ben Shields, Ed Cappleman, Owner, Ron Weischwill, Store Manager at the time. (deceased)

Story by: Dave Shabaz
Contributed photos



This is the entrance to the retail store in Yorktown.



2nd and 3rd generation Capplemans. Brett and his daughter Alexis.



The photo of the late Joyce Hoefling greets each customer as they enter the retail store. She was a longtime employee who passed away two years ago.

When you first walk into the Apple Ace Hardware and Lumber store here in Yorktown, Texas, you are immediately greeted by a framed, 8x10 photo of a lovely lady named Joyce Hoefling. Joyce was a longtime employee of the store who passed away two years ago. Because of this photo, you immediately feel a sense of family when you walk in, and it tells you that you've come to the right place to shop. You can obviously buy some of the things elsewhere that Apple Hardware in Yorktown provides, but what you can't get at other stores is that immediate sense of family and that makes you feel comfortable and keeps you coming back.

In 1998, Ed and Carolyn Cappleman opened their first Ace Hardware & Lumber store in Luling, Texas. Ed was born in Hooks, Texas and came from a very poor upbringing, not having many of the simple things that we all take for granted, such as clean running water, and indoor plumbing. He went to junior college in Texarkana where he played running back on the football team. He decided to leave for California where his plan was to "hit it big," out there, but his journey was derailed by love. He made it as far as Dallas, where he met his future bride Carolyn and she changed his definition of, "hitting it big." He had met the love of his life and together they began building their family right here in Texas when they married in 1965. They then added a son & daughter to their family. Ed began working in a lumber yard, loading lumber with his bare hands. He worked his way up to management and in 1998 he purchased Ace Hardware in Luling. When I asked Bret if his grandparents lived long enough to see Ed's success, he smiled and said, "yes they did."

For the next ten years, Ed and Carolyn continued to grow their hardware and lumber business in Luling. In 2008, they decided to open their second Apple Hardware and Lumber store and they picked the city of Yorktown. With Yorktown being an easy one-hour drive from Luling, Ed thought it would be the perfect spot and by this time, his son Bret was a part of the operation. Bret joined his dad in 2001 after working as a regional representative for Ace Hardware. And in 2009, the family suffered the loss of Carolyn, who passed away.

When Bret joined the family business in 2001, he already had a growing family of his own. He's been married to his wife Kristen for 32 years. They have three children, son Chase who is 31 years old. They have two daughters, Kaitlin, 26 and Alexis, 24. They've also been blessed with four grandchildren. Bret's wife Kristen takes a lot of pressure off Bret by handling many behind the scenes duties, such as payroll, employee



Longtime bookkeeper, Kim Farrow, proudly displays a gag gift she received for all of her hard work. They are a fun group at Apple Ace Hardware in Yorktown.



Feed store Manager, Beth Luke, serving stew.



The Yorktown Apple Ace store provides feed and horse and cattle animal health products, along with a lumber yard.



Store Manager, John Rogers, along with Chase Cappleman and Todd Metting, get into the holiday spirit each year.

benefits and with each store having its own gift shop, she also handles those duties. “She does so much more, and I don’t know where I’d be without her,” said Bret.

In 2012, the Cappleman’s opened their third Ace Hardware and Lumber store in Smithville and this year, they opened up their fourth in Eagle Lake. But no matter how many locations they have, each store has the same family feel. In the Yorktown store, they still have two employees from when they bought the store in 2008. One of those employees is Kim Farrow, who has been the bookkeeper there since she was hired. Kim said, “even though we’re a small business, I appreciate that they treat us like family members and offer us flexible schedules.” According to Bret, along with the flexible schedules, they offer benefits and paid vacations and each week the employees have set days off so they can plan time with their families and enjoy their free time.

Bret said that they do business in five separate counties, but DeWitt County has been wonderful to work with. “They are the easiest county to do business with,” said Bret. “The county is extremely business friendly and the customers here in Yorktown are simply good, hard-working, honest people and it’s a pleasure for us to serve them each and every day.”

Ace Hardware has made the national news recently. They turned 100 years old this year. They were founded in 1924 by a small group of Chicago hardware store owners. Since then, they have grown to over 6,000 locations with an annual revenue of \$25 billion nationwide. More surprising than anything is how Ace has been “David,” beating the “Goliaths,” which are Home Depot and Lowe’s Home Improvement stores. When people see the Ace logo, it puts them at ease. The big box stores, no matter how hard they try, just can’t match the personal feel that your local Apple Ace Hardware store can provide and in towns like Yorktown, where they also provide a lumber yard, all your hardware needs and feed for your cattle, why would anyone want to shop at any big box store when you have this type of personalized service right in your backyard.

The Cappleman family now has third generation family members working in their stores and as long as they continue to treat their employees and their customers the way their parents and grandparents have, Apple Ace Hardware will surely continue to grow and prosper in our wonderful Texas communities.



Kim Farrow nervously climbs the ladder to decorate the beautiful Christmas tree.

Yorktown News-View

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Hurricane Season - Prepare For an “Extremely Active 2024 Season”

article by: **RICHARD N. CARBONARA, JR., CIC PRESIDENT, RNC INSURANCE**

Weather forecasters at Colorado State University forecast 23 named storms, 11 of which will become hurricanes in an “extremely active” 2024 Atlantic hurricane season. CSU’s prediction is based on warm sea surface temperatures and the impending end of the El Nino weather pattern as it becomes La Nina. This means that less high winds needed to break up storms in the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean in the summer and fall.

Remember, hurricanes can strike far beyond the coast. When hurricanes move inland, they are called tropical storms, and can be just as destructive. Whatever they’re called when they hit, these storms can cause serious injury and extensive property damage.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) suggests you prepare before the season begins. You can shop to get your disaster supplies while the shelves are still fully stocked.

Develop an Evacuation Plan

Now is the time to begin planning where you would go and how you would get there. You need not travel hundreds of miles. You could arrange to stay with a friend or relative who lives in a sturdy home outside a flood prone area. Plan multiple routes. Account for pets!

Assemble Disaster Supplies

You are going to need supplies, whether evacuating or sheltering-in-place, not just to get through the storm but the aftermath of the event. You will need water, non-perishable food, and medicine for each person in your family to last at least 3 days or longer. Electricity and water could be out for an extended period. You will need a battery-powered radio, flashlights, and cash. You may need a portable-powered USB charger for your cell phones. Again, don’t forget your pets!

Create a Communication Plan

Write down your hurricane plan and give it to your family. Choose family meeting places and include an out-of-town location in case of evacuation. Include a list of emergency contacts and be sure to include utilities and critical services.

Strengthen Your Home

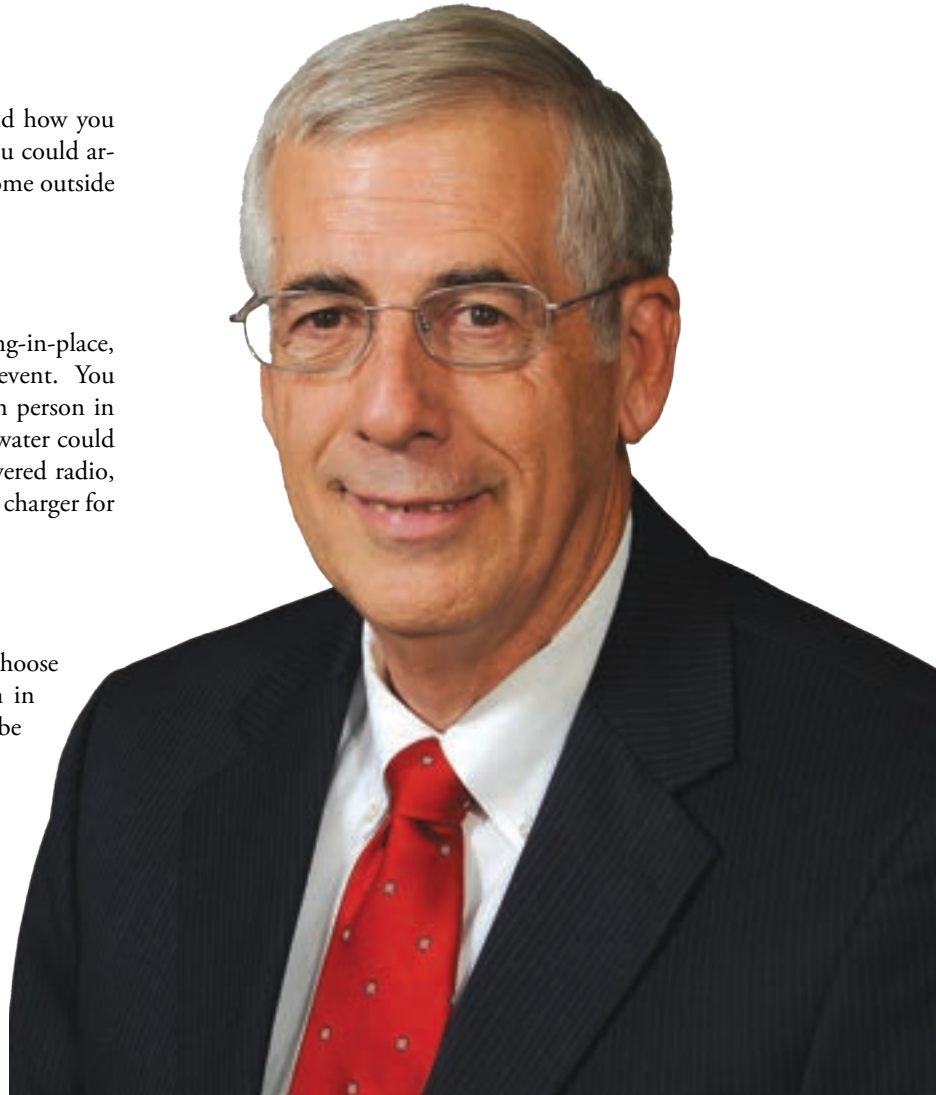
Several things can protect your home to withstand hurricane impacts. Trim trees. If possible, install shutters, seal outside wall openings, and remember your garage door is the most vulnerable part of the home. There are retrofits

for garage doors that are available. Now is the time to purchase supplies to have on hand to use to board up windows and doors ahead of a storm.

Get an Insurance Checkup & Document Your Possessions

Call your insurance agent or company and discuss your policy to make sure you have enough coverage to repair or replace your home and your personal property. Video your belongings. This will help in case of a loss. Please remember that homeowners and renters insurance does not cover flooding. You will need a separate Flood Insurance policy. Flood insurance is available through your agent, carrier, or the National Flood Insurance Program at floodsmart.gov. It is very important to act now, as flood insurance has a 30-day waiting period.

You can find additional information on Hurricane Preparedness, including how to build a Disaster Supply Kit, at noaa.gov, fema.gov, and various other sites.





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KATIE NEWMAN
Executive Director of the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce, L.

Experience the heartwarming embrace of small-town charm in Yorktown, Texas! As the Executive Director of the Yorktown Chamber of Commerce, L., Katie Newman, extend a warm invitation for you to discover the inviting atmosphere that makes Yorktown feel like home.

Yorktown Texas



From the friendly wave of the Main Street business owner to the boutique beckoning you for a delightful browse, and finally, choose between Aunt Di's Kounty Kichen's southern home style food and old country debuts or the local 5D steakhouse offering a mix of cold beer, hot food, and live music - Yorktown has something special for everyone.

Explore our rich history along the historic Indianola Trail, where numerous historical markers paint vivid pictures of days gone by. Visit the Old Yorktown Cemetery to pay respects to figures like Captain York, one of the town's original founders, who met his fate at the hands of Indians shortly after Yorktown's establishment.

Our commitment to veterans is deeply ingrained in Yorktown. Witness poignant moments in history at our monuments, including the one on Highway 72, commemorating Harmon Block, a soldier who raised the flag on Iwo Jima. The Vietnam Helicopter, soaring above Main Street, casts a meaningful shadow, honoring those who served. Monuments in Yorktown City Park and at the Vietnam Veterans Center pay tribute to the names of our local heroes who served or sacrificed for our freedom.



After a day of exploration, unwind with a stroll through Yorktown City Park, providing the perfect space for some fresh air and exercise. Join us in Yorktown, where every corner echoes the warmth of community and the echoes of our vibrant history."



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Luling Sausage Sandwich

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Pork Chile Verde Burrito



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