

# Keeping Youth in Rural Communities

*How co-ops can make a difference for young people*



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

**IN JUNE, CECA SENDS** two students to Washington, D.C., for the annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour. There, they join more than 1,600 other high school students from rural areas around the country. For most of them, this is the trip of a lifetime.

They will meet elected officials, see the U.S. Capitol and historical sites, and meet hundreds of their peers. They will return home with great memories.

Then what? Where will the young go? Will they leave the places they've called home? Or will they stay to help create stable communities?

According to a study on rural youth migration, many young people in rural areas have a negative view of their communities when compared to major urban centers. There is a perception that rural areas offer limited economic and social opportunities.

CECA is working to change that perception by joining forces with our schools and the youth of our communities.

- ▶ Through their research to participate in the Youth Tour program, students learn about the cooperative model and how it affects their communities. In addition, they have the opportunity to meet with their elected officials and learn more about legislative issues that affect their communities and themselves.

- ▶ Through the CECA Student Leadership Conference, students participate in leadership exercises that require them to design a project benefiting either their school or their community. They create detailed plans for how to bring their chosen project to fruition.

- ▶ Through our Scholarship for Excellence and Operation Round Up Scholarship, six students receive \$1,000 scholarships to help them achieve their higher education goals.

- ▶ Through the Ignite the Flight program, students learn how to create a detailed portfolio to help them get into the college, university or trade school of their choice, or into the military or workforce.

Cooperatives follow a business model, but unlike investor-owned companies that focus almost exclusively on turning a profit, cooperatives serve a vital economic and social purpose for the communities where they operate. We can change the perception that rural areas offer limited opportunities.

CECA was created to improve the quality of life in our area by providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Although that mission has been accomplished in many ways, it needs to be continually maintained and expanded. Sending our best and brightest youths to Washington, D.C., for a week is a wonderful step toward that goal, but we need to take the next step. We must make sure that young people know and understand the critically important roles they play in our community.

We're committed to engaging youths in our community. Our challenge is to ensure that everyone works together to find and develop economic and social opportunities that will allow young people to stay in our community. Together, we can do this.

Because none of us is as smart as all of us, we welcome your thoughts. Contact us at [memberservices@ceca.coop](mailto:memberservices@ceca.coop) to share your thoughts on how CECA can better engage and retain the youth of our communities.



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## Power Tip

**Having your AC inspected by a professional before you fire it up for the summer can save you money and headaches in the future. A serviceperson should check the motor, blower, drain line, coils, operating pressures and temperatures, return and supply lines, refrigerant levels and the air filter.**

**Contact CECA at 1-800-915-2533 to learn how to get a rebate once the inspection has been completed.**



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**HAPPY  
FATHER'S DAY**  
SUNDAY, JUNE 21

My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person: He believed in me. —Jim Valvano

# Do You Have an Unclaimed Check?

**NUMEROUS CAPITAL CREDITS CHECKS MAILED** to CECA members have been returned by the U.S. Postal Service as undeliverable. The last known addresses of these members were used for the mailing. CECA would very much like to deliver these checks to their rightful owners. If you recognize your name, or know the correct address or phone number of anyone listed on these pages, please Nancy Isham at 1-800-915-2533 or email [nisham@ceca.coop](mailto:nisham@ceca.coop).

|                       |                      |                      |                         |                      |                       |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| A K O PRODUCTION CORP | BARR MICHAEL JAMES   | BOYD WILLIAM L       | CARR DAVID A            | CONNALLY L JIM       | DOERSCHUK PAUL        |
| A W S PETROLEUM       | BARRINGTON CLAUD     | BOYLE JERRY          | CARROLL AMY LYNN        | CONQUISTADOR         | DONICA MAVIN A        |
| ABLES M R             | BARROW BILLY DARIN   | BRADFORD JACK        | CARSON CHARLES R        | PETROLEUM            | DORAN JIM & LINDA     |
| ABSHIER HOWARD        | BARTON ELVOYD        | BRADLEY WILLIAM R    | CARTER DOUGLAS          | CONSTANCIO HERB      | DOSSEY ELMER          |
| ADAMS RONALD L        | BASKIN RICHARD DON   | BRAGG WELDON LEE     | WAYNE                   | CONTEL TELEPHONE CO  | DOUBLE RIVER OIL & GA |
| ADCOCK FLOYD ESTATE   | BAXLEY MICHAEL DON   | BRANTLEY LE ROYCE    | CARTNER ALLEN           | COOPER JOSEPH CLYDE  | DOUGLAS CABLEVISION   |
| ADCOCK RICHARD        | BAXTER DENNIS ALAN   | BRASEL STEVE         | CASEY KENT              | COPE BRIAN WAYNE     | LP IV                 |
| LOWELL                | BAXTER INC B         | BRAWNER DEVELOPMENT  | CASEY LELAND            | COTULA OIL & GAS     | DRAGOO JACK ALLEN     |
| ADKINS BOBBY          | BAY MARK RESOURCES   | GRP                  | CASON R H               | COVERT CURT          | DUCOTE RANDAL         |
| AGUERRO DOMINIC       | BAYOU CITY           | BRENEMAN JON WADE    | CASS CHARLIE W          | COVEY SR JIMMY C     | MICHAEL               |
| AKE RICKY M           | BROADCASTING         | BREWER TIMOTHY       | CASSELL OIL CO          | COVINGTON JAMES      | DUDLEY GEORGE         |
| ALDRIDGE D B          | BAZE JOHN M          | ANDREW               | CATE JERRELL L          | ROBERT               | DUFFEE W M            |
| ALDRIDGE JERRY C      | BEATTY CAROLYN T     | BRICKER DONALD L     | CAVIN JEANNIE           | COX DON              | DUGAN PAUL            |
| ALDRIDGE WALTER       | BECK HIRAM RAYMOND   | BRIGHT MARVIS        | CECIL JR DONALD         | COX JERRY W          | DUPRIEST GARLAND      |
| DUANE                 | BEE BRANCH RANCH CO  | BROLIN DONALD        | CLINTON                 | COX JIMMY            | DURDEN KENNETH D      |
| ALEXANDER SCOTT K     | BEL CATTLE COMPANY   | BROOKS C R MRS       | CEN TEX FEEDS           | COX MITTIE           | DURHAM JOE A          |
| ALEXANDER W E         | BELL GENEVIA PETE    | BROOKS MILDRED F     | CENTRAL BASIN OIL       | COZART RUBE          | DURHAM JR L V         |
| ALLCORN HARVIE        | BENNETT FREDRICK OR  | BROWN BARBARA ANN    | INVESTM                 | CRAWFORD M N         | DYNEGY MIDSTREAM      |
| EDWARD JR             | DEBBI                | BROWN ELVIE JR       | CERVIN KENNETH N        | CRAWFORD TINA        | SERV LP               |
| ALLDREDGE JAMES R     | BESSENT ALLEN        | BROWN F JACK         | CHAMBERS DARRIN B       | CREECH PEGGY JO      | DYNEGY MIDSTREAM      |
| ALLEN BO EMORY        | BESSENT BILL         | BROWN GARRY L        | CHAMBERS VELMA J        | CREEK R E            | SERV LP               |
| ALLEN HETTIE          | BEUKEBOOM FRANS      | BROWN KIMBERLY A     | CHANCE RESEARCH CORP    | CREW GARY STEVEN     | DYSERT JAMIE RAE      |
| ALLIANCE GAS CO       | BIGGS DWIGHT         | BROWN PRENDON S      | CHAPMAN ENERGY          | CROCKER RONALD GLENN | EAKIN J D             |
| ALLISON PEGGY         | BIGGS JAMES V        | BROWNING E J         | CHARANZA RONNIE         | CROFTON BOULDIN PAT  | EAKINS LON R          |
| AMCOLE ENERGY CORP    | BIGGS ROY SCOTT      | BROWNLEE WELL        | CHARLES HILL DRILLING   | CROSSON SHAYNE       | EASON DARYL & AMANDA  |
| AMERICAN LAND         | BINT LYNN            | SERVICE              | CHICK JO LANE DUDLEY    | CROUCH RANCH         | EAST MURRY            |
| PLANNING              | BIRD AMANDA CHRISTIN | BROWNWOOD ENERGY     | CHILDERS RON            | CROW CHARLEEN        | EASTERLING DOYLE      |
| AMERICAN RESORT       | BIRD JOYCE DARE      | BRUMBELOW RICHARD N  | CHILDRESS MICHAEL ROY   | CROW VICKY JEAN      | ROBERT                |
| DEVELOPME             | BLACK E A            | BRYAN BILL           | CHISM KERRY L           | CUATRO OIL & GAS     | EASTERLING JOSEPH G   |
| AMERICAN TOWER CORP   | BLACK ELSIE S        | BRYANT CULLEN TRAVIS | CHOAT BRITNEY           | CUELLAR CHINA        | EATON PETROLEUM INC   |
| AMMONS W G            | BLACKBURN CHARLES    | BRYANT DAN BRYCE     | MICHELE                 | CULPEPPER JERRY NEAL | ECKERT DARYL          |
| ANDERSON O BRENT      | MIKE                 | BUDDIN ROGER M       | CHOATE BOBBY G          | CUMBERLAND           | EDINGTON OIL CO       |
| ANDERSON RONNIE       | BLACKERBY VINSON     | BURD RHONDA JO       | CHRISTMAS LAVONNA       | PETROLEUM            | EDWARDS JAMES T       |
| WESLEY                | RYAN                 | BURKS J W            | CIRCLE H PRODUCTION     | CUMMINGS SARAH       | EDWARDS LUTHER T      |
| ANDERSON ZANNA        | BLAIR JAMES E        | BURNEY T KING        | CIRCLE M ENERGY CO      | CUNNINGHAM JEAN      | EHRLICH GARY          |
| ANDREATTA JACKY       | BLEDSE RANDY         | BURNS ROBERT         | CITATION OIL & GAS CORP | CURTIS ELVIN J       | ELITE MILK CO         |
| ANDREWS TOWER         | BLEVINS MARGIE A     | BUSBY BOBBY WAYNE    | CITY OF DELEON-GARDEN   | CURTIS ROBBY JAY     | ELKINS JAMES TRAMPUS  |
| RENTAL                | BLISARD RANCE        | BUTLER CARROLL R     | CLARK BOWEN             | CURTIS               | ELLIOTT E Y           |
| APPLEWHITE JACK       | BLOXOM CATTLE        | BUTLER MICHAEL D     | CLARK CHARLES L         | D & D DRILLING CO    | ELLISON MELVA         |
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| ASHE L L              | LLC                  | C & S FOODS          | CLARK JOHN BOB          | D J & T ENERGY       | ELMAC OIL & GAS INC   |
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| B J'S COUNTRY KITCHEN | BOPP ANN             | CAGLE DALE           | CLAYDESTA               | SALVADOR             | ENGLE I D             |
| B L I INC             | BOREN ANITA          | CALKINS CRAIG M      | COMMUNICATIONS          | DAVIS DUDLEY W SR    | ENSERCH PROCESSING    |
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| BAILEY WAYNE          | BOWDEN DOUG          | JAMES                | CODA ENERGY INC         | DAVIS PHIL W         | EUBANKS DONALD        |
| BAIRD JOE R           | BOWEN MRS RUTH       | CAMP GLADYS W        | COFFEE BETTY ANN        | DAWSON EDDIE RAY     | EVANS BETTY J         |
| BAKER LARRY D         | BOWLES JOE A         | CAMPBELL STEPHEN RAY | COFFEY SALLIE           | DAY O OIL CO         | FAGLIE BOBBY GLEN     |
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| BAKER VIRGINIA        | BOYCE CRAIG ALLEN    | INVESTMENTS          | COLE ROBERT R           | DENNINGTON G DAVID   | FARRAR CHRISTOPHER    |
| BANGHART BEVERLY A    | BOYCE JR FRED H      | CANTERA RESOURCES    | COLEMAN JERRY           | DI SCIULLO O V       | THOMAS                |
| BANKS JOHNNY DERRELL  | BOYCE LOIS ANN       | INC                  | COLLIDA ADA             | DICKEY MAGLENE       | FAUGHT W B            |
| BANNOWSKY FRED        | BOYCE VOLENA PEARL   | CANTERA RESOURCES    | COLONIAL OAKS RANCH     | DILLARD H R          | FAULKNER MARVIN E     |
| BARKER JESSIE         | BOYD CHARLES ERVIN   | INC                  | COMANCHE OIL EXPLOR     | DIXON EDDIE          | FEIST LINDA GAIL      |
| BARR JAMES C          | BOYD SYLVIA          | CARLA PETROLEUM      | CONINE JOHNNY           | DODSON L RAY         | FERGUSON DUSTIN &     |

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| OPERATING             | GOTOVAC ROBERT        | HILLIARD HAROLD          | JONES JAMES B ESTATE   | LOUDERMILK PATRICIA   | MILLER L CRAIG        |
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| FISHER F G            | GRABOW GARY G         | SAMUEL                   | JONES SAMMY L          | LOWRANCE ENTERPRISES  | MILLICAN CALVIN G JR  |
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| FITZPATRICK JAMES     | GRAHAM DONNA J        | HINTON TED AUSTIN        | JONES WILLIAM H JR     | LUECK ROBERT J        | MINSHAW DARLENE       |
| FIZER WEDNESDAY M     | GRANT DAVID E         | HOGAN LONNIE D           | JORDAN DENNIS L        | LUKER TOMMY DAVID     | MITCHELL GAS SERVICES |
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| FLAKE PAUL R          | GRAY GARY DON         | HOLAMON BETTY JEAN       | KAMB INC               | M J M OIL & GAS       | MITCHELL OTIS         |
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| FLORENCE JOEL JAMES   | GREEN DONALD W        | HOLLAND CURTIS           | KEA F W                | MARETT BILL           | MOLINAR RICARDO H     |
| FLOWERS DON           | GREEN G DAVID         | HOLLAND W P              | KEITH EDMOND F         | MARTIN FRED C         | MONDIALE ENERGY INC   |
| FLOYD MARION B        | GRELLE LARRY          | HOLLEY G L               | KEITH MARGARET G       | MARTIN RICK E         | MONSEY J R            |
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| FORD BOBBY GENE       | PEYTON                | HORN JO ANNE             | KEMPE HOMER L          | MATHEWS LINDA SUE     | MOONEY CARROL         |
| FORD E E              | GRIMES B R            | HORNSBY LELAND           | KENNING DONALD         | MATHEWS ODIS H        | MOORE CASEY W &       |
| FORD RONNIE           | GUERRA D P            | HOUSE WAYNE              | KERN JUSTIN DEWAYNE    | MAXEY SHERRY          | BRANDA DA             |
| FOREMAN ALLEN         | GUIDRY RHONDA M       | HOWARD BOB               | KEY RICHARD F          | MC AFEY KYLE ELLIOTT  | MOORE KAREN J         |
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| FORREST JOYCE WARREN  | GULF RESOURCES CORP   | HOWELL GLEN              | KIMMELL KRISTY B       | MC CALLIE VICTOR      | MOORE RICHARD A       |
| FOXWORTH KATHRYN      | GUTHRIE HOMER E SKIP  | HOY JOHN D               | KING JACK L            | AARON                 | MOORE TRACY LYNN      |
| LYNN                  | GUTIERREZ RUDY P      | HUDMAN & SON             | KING SCOTT DAVID       | MC CANN JR KELLY F    | MOORE VONDA L         |
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| FRANKLIN JAMES DAVID  | HALE MICHAEL RAY      | HUDSON MIKE              | KIRK W G               | MC COLLUM CLOVIS      | MORGAN JAMES          |
| FRANKLIN JUANETTA     | HALK CHARLES GREGORY  | HUFFAKER DONALD          | KIRKBY RICKEY L        | MC CORMICK JAMES S    | MORRIS BRYAN ANDREW   |
| FRAZIER EARL E        | HALL BRIAN SCOTT      | HUGHES RESOURCES         | KIZER BETH W           | MC COY BOBBIE L       | MORRIS LARRY L        |
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| GJERPE JON ARNI       | HEALY MARVIN S        | JOHNSON IVEY CHARLES     | EUGENE                 | MERCER GEORGE L       | PARKER & PARSLEY GAS  |
| GLASSON GLEN          | HEATH JACK            | JOHNSON JOHNNY B &       | LONE STAR SCREEN PRINT | MERIMAC INVESTMENTS   | PARRIS LYNIS EARL     |
| GOFF TOMMY            | HEDGES JOYCE LAVERNE  | MARY                     | INC                    | MERRIMAN STEPHEN C    | PARRIS LYNN           |
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| INC                   | HENRY KENNETH BART    | JOHNSTON JAMES B         | INC                    | MIEARS DOIL           | PATTERSON DALE GLENN  |

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| PATTERSON TONY DAN     | REED CONNIE L         | SANDERS TRACY JOE     | STEPHENS CULLEN JR     | TINER BILLY DEAN      | WESTERN GOLD'N GAS    |
| PAYNE ROBERT DALE      | REED H B              | SANDERS W N           | STEPHENS MARK W        | TIPPIE WILLIAM A      | CO                    |
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| PECAN VALLEY NUT CO    | REESE EXPLORATION INC | SAVAGE FRANKLIN CLEO  | STERLING OIL & GAS INC | TOLBERT LAYMON        | WESTFALL JR W J       |
| INC                    | REGAL OPERATING       | SAYLOR DOUG           | STEVENS ALBERT F       | TOWELL DELBERT C      | WESTMORELAND ESTATE   |
| PEERY LLOYD D          | REHM WADE             | SCHEFFEL DANNY        | STEVENS BARBARA        | TOWNSON BURNIE B      | J H                   |
| PENCE LAND & CATTLE CO | REIGER DON            | SCHERIGER MICKEY RYAN | STEVENS TROY B         | TRAYWICK RICHARD      | WETZEL JEFF           |
| LT                     | REIGER RANDY LYNN     | SCHKADE ESTATE BEN    | STEWART DAWN           | TRI-TEX PETROLEUM     | WG OPERATING INC      |
| PENN TEX ENGINEERING   | REYNOLDS KENNETH      | SCHNUR ALFRED         | CLEVELAND              | TROTTER GLEN          | WHEELER GLENN         |
| PERRY JAMES R          | MICHAEL               | SCHUMANN LAURA LEE    | STEWART WAYNE E        | TUBB WILLIAM          | WHITE CHARLES M       |
| PERRY JASON WAYNE      | RHODES EARLYE T       | SCOTT J B             | STEWART ESTATE D E     | TUCKCO PETROLEUM INC  | WHITE DAVID GLENN     |
| PERRY VETA RISTER      | RHYNE DONALD E        | SEAL GYMNASTICS       | STEWART JOHNNY         | TUCKER GARY           | WHITE MARIE           |
| PETERS HENRY           | RICE STEPHEN DEWAYNE  | SEARS TOM E           | STEWART PAUL D         | TUCKER JOE            | WHITE RICHARD L       |
| PETERS WESLEY GLENN    | RICHTER C W           | SEAY SHANNAN          | STONE ANITA            | TUCKER L E            | WHITELEY A F          |
| PETERSEN DAVID N       | RICKORDS DANNY L      | SEBASTIAN PHILLIP     | STONE III JOHN THOMAS  | TURNER DONALD W       | WHITLEY JR PHILLIP E  |
| PETERSON DWAYNE E      | RIDDLE NED            | SEDAM TOM A           | STORM STEPHEN PAUL     | TURNER ESTATE D E     | WHITNEY ROBERT ALLEN  |
| PETERSON JOE DUANE     | RIDGEWAY ROBERT E     | SEESE HAZEL           | STOUT STEPHANIE        | TWITCHELL III DONALD  | WHITTEN DONALD E      |
| PETTIJOHN ARNOLD       | RIGGS M HENSON        | SEGLER MD DANA F      | STOVER D G             | DEXT                  | WILDCAT DAIRY         |
| PFINGSTEN ED           | RILEY CHAD STACY      | SEIDER MICHAEL P      | STROUD MOZELLE         | TYSON KELLY L         | WILEY ELMO            |
| PHARR DARWIN           | RILEY SANDRA KAY      | SEIDER SHELIA LYNN    | STRUBE N H             | U S TELECOM           | WILKERSON CINDI       |
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| PICKARD ROBERT L       | RIVER COMMUNICATIONS  | SHANE JR JAMES H      | STUART ELIZABETH       | USSERY C W            | WILKINS MILDRED       |
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| POWELL GARRY KENT      | ROBINETTE STEPHEN     | SINGLETON LEE         | TACKETT RICHARD        | VINSON JIMMY          | WILLIFORD DURWARD V   |
| POWER DAVID            | DOW                   | SIPE JAMIE K          | TACKETT WILMA          | VINSON OPERATING      | WILLIS GERALD         |
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| PRICE HAROLD IRMA MRS  | MICHAEL               | DEP                   | TANDEM ENERGY CORP     | VITA ALISA A          | WILSON JOHN M         |
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| RANDLE DAL W           | EDWIN                 | SPIRIT OIL & GAS CORP | THOMPSON JENNIFER      | WEAKLAND              | YOUNG CHARLES M JR    |
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Pictured are Jerry and Verla Toney in their showroom with one of their favorite clients, Randy Travis. They have also had the honor and privilege of building custom lighting for Clint Eastwood, Sam Elliott, Catherine Ross, Gen. Tommy Franks, Congressman Markwayne Mullin, and a large number of big ranchers and Texas oil producers.

# Cherokee Iron Works

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

**IN THE WORKSHOP OF CHEROKEE IRON WORKS**, a water jet loudly pounds away on a 60-by-120-inch sheet of rustic metal. Each blast sends a high-velocity jet of water slicing through the 0.068-inch thick sheet. The cutter is connected to a high-pressure pump that forces water through a nozzle, cutting through the material by bombarding it with a stream of high-speed water and abrasive. Having never seen one at work, I was fascinated with watching as it created beautiful stars with waves inside. The precision of the cut was beyond compare.

Jerry Toney, who semiretired before moving his operation to Comanche County, is the No. 1 Western chandelier artist in the country. He did not get this title by accident but through hard work and lots of trial and error.

Jerry's story began in late 2000 when wife Verla was looking for chandeliers for their home. She was changing her décor to something of a Western theme. The crystal chandelier hanging in the living room was going to have to go, and she began searching for a suitable replacement. Frustrated with the lack

of quality products on the market, she finally turned to Jerry. "You know, you're a machinist, a tool and die maker; you know everything there is about math. Make one!" she said.

Jerry said he first thought, "Well, no problem. I've got everything I need to build her a light." He soon found that the process was more complicated than he had anticipated. "It took me about a year to get one satisfactory enough to hang in the house. We threw away probably a couple dozen. I just couldn't get it down pat. And then I came up with the diffuser material, muslin cloth on Lexan plastic," and everything began to fall into place.

By the end of 2001, Jerry had a product he was comfortable with and decided he would like to put it on the market. One of the first steps was to get listed with Underwriters Laboratories, which introduced another learning curve. "You can't just take a product and throw it out there," said Jerry. "The wiring has to be to code. Becoming UL-listed was huge. It taught us a lot of things about wiring lights that we needed." Becoming



◀ The water jet works on a custom chandelier featuring a company logo. This will be turned into a 48-inch-diameter chandelier with 12 bulbs from the Texas 2 Tier Collection. It is to be featured in the CEO's office of a prominent business and will be accompanied by a 60-inch Texas 2 Tier of the same art in the foyer. There will also be a 48-by-48-inch, diamond-shaped 3:10 to Yuma in the conference room. Every part of these chandeliers will be handmade. The 48-inch one alone will take approximately 12 hours to complete.



▲ Another favorite from the 3:10 to Yuma Collection is this 48-by-48-inch diamond-shaped chandelier with illuminated stage coach artwork and stars along the bottom that houses 16 60-watt bulbs.



◀ This Texas 2 Tier is 60 inches wide, featuring longhorn cattle and cowboys along the bottom tier. Jerry Toney developed his own diffuser out of Lexan and muslin cloth. "There's no metal in the top deck or bottom deck," Jerry said. "When the diffuser becomes the structure, you're talking about something different. The strength comes in the diffuser. It gives it a cleaner look, and that's what the Texas 2 Tier Collection is."

Jerry is pictured with the "Happy Trails" chandelier built for the Roy Rogers Museum. The chandelier is 7 feet tall and features the original score written by Dale Evans, silhouettes of Roy and Dale from some of their movies, and three life-size guitars. This piece hung in the foyer of the museum until it closed, at which time Jerry donated it and other custom pieces back to the museum. ▶



◀ From the El Paso Collection, this particular light is 30 inches in diameter, with nine 60-watt bulbs. It features El Paso-style art on the illuminated tier, with a sealed rust patina finish on steel construction and a frosted glass shade.

UL-listed also allowed them to ship anywhere in the U.S.

Jerry's first really big piece was "Happy Trails," a 7-foot-tall piece he created to be placed in the foyer of the Roy Rogers Museum. When Jerry first contacted Roy Rogers Jr., offering to build the foyer piece for free, "He just laughed at me," said Jerry. "I sent him a drawing of the Happy Trails Chandelier [and] within 10 seconds, he called me back and said, 'You have the commission.'"

Jerry informed Rogers that the piece would be 7 feet tall, with three full-size guitars on top, and the musical score to "Happy Trails" circling the 48-inch-wide tier. Rogers then sent the original "Happy Trails" score, as written by Dale Evans, to complete the piece. In addition, Jerry used actual footage from some of Roy Rogers' and Dale Evans' movies for the silhouettes along the bottom of the chandelier.

The museum closed in 2009, but not before it catapulted Cherokee Iron Works into fame. After the closing, Jerry donated the "Happy Trails" chandelier, along with others he

had commissioned for the museum, to be auctioned off by Christie's to help pay the museum's outstanding expenses. The various chandeliers sold for \$6,875 to \$20,000.

Jerry knew the Roy Rogers Museum pieces would give a boost to his career, but little did he know the extent to which they would help. The summer after the opening of the museum, Jerry received a call from Mickey Dawes, president of the Western Music Association, informing him that he had won the Western Way Award in honor of "keeping the western spirit alive in your artwork."

The Roy Rogers Museum turned out to be only the beginning of Jerry's work for prominent people. His clientele list includes Randy Travis, Clint Eastwood, Sam Elliott, Catherine Ross, Gen. Tommy Franks, Congressman Markwayne Mullin and a large number of big ranchers and Texas oil producers.

Obviously, not everyone wants horses, cows and cowboys on their chandeliers. Not a problem. Jerry welcomes custom orders and has done everything from Southwestern-style art to

“This is not my actual showroom” said Jerry Toney, owner and artist of Cherokee Iron Works. “My home is actually my studio. Do you want to see it?” Of course I did. I had seen the photos on his website and they made his work look amazing. I was not disappointed.

Jerry and Verla went with a Spanish patio look for their 4,200-square-foot home, which they built themselves. All of the lighting and much of the décor was built by Jerry, but the home also features a few custom pieces designed by other artists and either donated or traded.



motorcycles to peace symbols and fairies. Many clients want their brand or their logo, and Jerry is happy to oblige.

Cherokee Iron Works’ best-seller is a line of ceiling fans, or “fandeliers,” as Jerry and Verla like to call them. Their best-selling collection is the El Paso collection, which features a scene complete with cowboys and their cows and comes in a fan as well as a large selection of chandeliers.

In addition to the chandeliers and ceiling fans, Cherokee Iron Works also owns and controls Cherokee Rustic Switch and Outlet Covers. Originally, Jerry made the switch plates from materials left over from the chandeliers. “We got a lot of complaints because it was flat and didn’t fit well against the wall,” Jerry said. Not wanting to sell an inferior product, and not one to give up on a project, in 2008, Jerry built the tooling and dies to shape the switch cover metals into 3D shapes so

they would look like any other switch covers.

“You have to cut it, put it in a brake press and bend it [to make it] three-dimensionally shaped just like the plastic ones. Then you have to countersink the holes for the screws, then you have to polycoat it. There’s about seven steps,” Verla explained. Jerry still uses the rustic metal, with or without the artwork on top. After the restructuring of the plates to a 3D form, the switch cover line became so vast that the Toney family took it exclusively to the Internet. Verla fills the orders, and Jerry’s job is simply to keep up with supply and demand.

Jerry and Verla agree that moving to Comanche County has been one of the biggest blessings of their life. “The quietness,” said Jerry, “gives you time to think, time to do what you want to do.” This peacefulness has also given Jerry the ability to sit down and think some things through, determining which prod-



ucts work and which do not. In addition, it has been the catalyst for new designs, some of which, Jerry said he thinks, have taken the work to a new level.

Jerry credits Verla for the hard work that she most likely would not have claimed for herself. “Without her, it doesn’t work,” he said. “The fact is that you can’t be an artist in this day and age—and go to the depth we have, and have the product we have—unless you have somebody behind you who’s putting you at that point. It’s just not possible. And people who have done it without a mate—I don’t know how they do it.”

The selection of products at Cherokee Iron Works varies in size, including collections such as the Cherokee Rose, Kokopelli and a variety of mountain pieces that include elk and bear. The sizes range from as small as directional bar lighting all the way to the 7-foot-tall “Happy Trails” piece and can be custom-ordered to fit your space and décor.

To see a detailed selection of Cherokee Iron Works chandeliers, fans and a plethora of other items they produce, visit their website at [cherokeeironworks.com](http://cherokeeironworks.com). For more information, email [sales@cherokeeironworks.com](mailto:sales@cherokeeironworks.com) or call (254) 879-2246.



## CECA

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### OFFICE HOURS

**Comanche Office:** Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Early Office:** Monday, Wednesday and Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed from 1 to 2 p.m.

**Eastland Office:** Tuesday and Thursday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### YOUR LOCAL PAGES

This section of Texas Co-op Power is produced by CECA each month to provide you with information about current events, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact Shirley at the Comanche office or at [sdukes@ceca.coop](mailto:sdukes@ceca.coop).



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