



Happy New Year

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

Happy New Year! Chu Shen Tan! Gelukkig Nieuwjaar! Onnellista Uutta Vuotta! Prosit Neujahr! Feliz Año Nuevo! Prospero Año Nuevo! No matter what country you are in or how you say it, it still means the same thing: **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

New Year's Day is the oldest of all celebrated holidays, beginning about 4,000 years ago in ancient Babylon. This tradition began about 2,000 B.C. and was celebrated on the first day of spring. This was a logical time to start a new year. After all, it is the season of rebirth, planting new crops and blossoming. The celebration lasted 11 days, and each day had its own particular mode of celebration.

New Year's customs are about as diverse as the countries in which they are celebrated. "Auld Lang Syne" is sung at the stroke of midnight in almost every English-speaking country in the world.

In Mexico, many people gather with their relatives and friends to celebrate the New Year. When the clock strikes midnight they eat 12 grapes, one with each toll, to bring good luck for the next 12 months. There are also those who take out their suitcases and walk around the block, meaning they



wish they could travel next year.

Many German-speaking areas celebrate by attending a "Sylvester Ball," where there is eating, drinking, dancing and singing. It may be accompanied by the popular "Sylvester" custom of Bleigiessen. A small piece of lead will be melted over a flame in an old spoon and dropped into a bowl of cold water. From the shape you can supposedly tell your fortune for the coming year. People would also leave a bit of every food eaten on New Year's Eve on their plate until after midnight as a way of ensuring a well-stocked larder. Carp was included, as it was thought to bring wealth. The tradition of an image of a baby with a New Year's banner as a symbolic representation of the new year originated in Germany sometime in the 14th century.

Of course we all know what Americans do: We party till midnight, watch the ball drop at Times Square in New York City and kiss for good luck at the stroke of midnight. We eat black-eyed peas for luck and watch football on New Year's Day as we make countless New Year's resolutions, which most of us can't keep past the first day.

At Comanche Electric Cooperative, our resolution for the upcoming year will continue to be what it has been since 1938: to provide the best possible service at the least possible price. We strive to accomplish this goal every day of every year.

Our focus for 2008 will be on conservation. Join us each month in this section of *Texas Co-op Power* as we help our members learn the best ways to practice conservation in all aspects of our lives. Check out our website, www.ceca.coop, and click on "Home Energy Saver" on the right side of your screen for a do-it-yourself energy audit, along with links to other sites that will help us learn to be more energy conscious. Or call for a free in-home energy audit by one of our trained professionals.

And have a Happy New Year!!!!



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YOUR "LOCAL PAGES"

This section of *Texas Co-op Power* is produced by Comanche EC 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.

COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

It's Time To Think Conservation

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

Turn off those lights. Electricity is expensive, and money doesn't grow on trees you know!"

"Close that door! You're letting out all the cool/warm air."

"Don't stand there with that refrigerator door open! Do you know how much it costs to keep that thing cold?"

How many times did you hear these comments as you were growing up? I, and most of my generation, heard them repeatedly. We grew up in an era when many families still had only one working parent. Mom stayed home, Dad went to work, money was scarce, and we were expected to learn how to be efficient in all ways possible.

We had only one family car, and even though we were only 3 miles from town, we rarely made the trip for anything frivolous. We hung our clothes out on the clothesline instead of using a dryer, we were expected to turn off the lights when we left a room, and the TV was never to be left on unattended. Daddy milked the cow daily, and Mother made butter and cream out of it. We fought the copperhead snakes for the privilege of fresh blackberries picked from the fence line in the pasture and battled yellow jackets and wasps for the juicy peaches and plums from the trees in the orchard. We raised chickens to have eggs in the refrigerator and poultry in the freezer. We turned off the heat at night and bundled up in our beds to save on energy. We took baths with only a few inches of water because it took money to run the pump to transport that precious commodity into the house. Such was the life of a rural kid in the 1960s. Money was hard to come by, and we kids were expected to do our part to conserve in every way imaginable.

Things have changed a lot in the past 40 years. Most people think nothing of walking out of the house with the lights on and the TV blaring. We are constantly on the go, whether it is for business, pleasure or the kids' or grandkids' ballgames or piano and dance recitals. We may complain about the cost of fuel

or the gas mileage we get, but we don't slow down much. We pay more money than it is worth for the convenience of fast food that is not healthy, and we buy bottled water instead of drinking from the tap. Whatever happened to conserving not only our precious dollars, but our natural resources as well?

"Texas Wants More Kilowatts," "Will Texas Run Out of Electricity?" "Texas Reviews Water Shortage," "Gas Prices Rising." These news headlines should be enough to open our eyes and send us reeling in the direction of change, but we opt for convenience and pleasure over efficiency and conservation. We read of the high cost of fuel, our dwindling water supply, global warming, possible rolling blackouts and the high cost of new power plants. We go to the mailbox each day with a feeling of dread, not wanting to face the mountain of bills waiting for us to open them. We get lightheaded at the staggering numbers on them.

We would like to help make a change, but the natural resource that seems to be dwindling the most is our time. Society and our fast-paced lives force us to lean more toward convenience and less toward saving our planet, or our kilowatt-hours.

The price of power is rising rapidly, and Comanche Electric Cooperative is working hard to control the cost of that power. Across the board, electricity providers need to build new power plants and transmission lines, and that requires a long-term investment of time and money. The consensus is that there must be new generation built in Texas by 2012, or there could be a shortage of spinning reserve capacity. This could result in power curtailments and/or revolving blackouts. Electricity cannot be stored. It must be generated on demand, at time of use.

Our society's demand for electric power is growing faster than production is coming online. To supply our future needs for electric energy, plans must be set in motion today to ensure that tomorrow's needs can be met.

Coal is plentiful and relatively inexpensive but has environmental issues. Natural gas supplies are limited, and the fuel is becoming more expensive every day. Wind power is environmentally friendly but, unfortunately, is expensive and doesn't work when the wind doesn't blow and is able to supply only a small portion of our energy needs. Nuclear generation is efficient and clean; however, construction of new units requires 10-25 years and is the most expensive to build, and there is still an issue with the disposal of spent fuel. Brazos Electric Cooperative, our power supplier, is building a new-technology coal-fired generation plant as well as natural gas plant additions and is participating in wind projects.

After analyzing the situation, what choice do we have? While there is no one big answer to this problem, one part of the solution points toward conservation. At least it is the one thing that we as individuals can do. Individually, we cannot build a coal plant or a nuclear plant. But we can do our part by conserving the resources that are available to us now. The cheapest, cleanest and most conservative power plants are the ones we don't have to build.

Through our conservation efforts, we can more easily afford the increased cost of living. During the course of the next few months, we will dedicate space in these local pages to inform you of ways you can make a difference in all aspects of conservation, from electric service to natural gas, water and fuel.

Comanche Electric Cooperative is committed to keeping you informed about the cost of your electric service, our efforts to curtail those costs, and ways you can minimize those costs through your own efforts. Our recent survey proved that you place a lot of confidence in us, and our goal is to maintain that trust by continually looking for new ways of providing the best possible service at the least possible cost. After all, without you there would be no Comanche Electric Cooperative.

Help Us Locate These Accounts

These capital credit checks were issued on June 4, 2007, and were returned because of insufficient addresses. They represent a portion of \$1 million refunded for service from 1971-81.

A OK Oil
Abilene Paving
Hershel Ackers
William A. Adamek
C.N. Adams
David Adams
E.A. Adams
Jack Adams
Judy Adams
J.V. Adams
L. Llaydoyt Adams
Adobe Oil & Gas Corp.
E.E. Agnew
Mrs. James Ed Agnew
James R. Agnew
Agriplex Producers
Alamo Explosives
A.F. Aldridge
J.L. Aldridge
Alexander Land & Cattle
A.D. Alexander Jr.
Kent Alexander
Roy Alexander
Charles R. Alford
J.M. Alford
Mack G. Alford
M.W. Alford
R.D. Alford
Ronald Alford
Allan Construction Co.
Eugene Alldredge
H.M. Allen
Keith Allen
Thomas C. Allen
W.C. Allen
James E. Allison
Margaret Allison
Alpha Pork Producers
Altex Oil Corp.
Amco Energy Corp.
American Petrofina Co.
Anchor Sales & Service
E.E. Anders
B.J. Anderson
Deborah D. Anderson
Gary Anderson
Huston Anderson

P.H. Anderson
Mrs. W.T. Anderson
Mel Anders
Andover-Santa Fe Minerals
Donald R. Andrews
Jim Andrews
Kenneth Andrews
T.D. Andrews
Bruce Angerstein
Peggy Ann Inc.
Apollo Oil Co.
G.S. Aguirre
Arapaho Petroleum
Arcardia Refining Co.
Aries Petroleum
Arklatex Corp
Armer Oil Co.
Armstrong & McLernon
W.H. Bill Armstrong
Willis R. Armstrong
E.R. Arnold Jr.
John A. Arnold
M.P. Arrant
Ascot Oil Company
L.L. Ashe
R.L. Atchley
Jim Atkinson
Roy A. Atkinson
Atlanta Pet Prod.
Austin Pence Oil Co.
Robbie Autrey
T.G. Auvenshine
Larry Avants
J.C. Avary
James K. Avent, M.D.
Ayers & Burch
B&C Land Co.
B&C Texas Oil Property
BPP&W
John B. Bachman
Kermit Baer
George Bagley
Arthur L. Bailey
Henry Bailey
Inez Bailey
J.W. Bailey
Lee Bailey

Leston Bain
J.M. Baines
Boyd Baker
Burl Baker
Ira Baker
Jerry Baker
Mrs. Juanita Baker
K.R. Baker
R.B. Baker
Ray Baker
Stanley E. Baker
Wesley Baker
Chris Ball
Gerald Ballard
W.H. Ballew
Guadalupe Banda
Don Bandy Const. Co.
Jethro N. Banks
Banleham Oil Co.
Ben R. Barbee Jr.
Earl A. Barber
C.R. Barbian
Barco Oil & Gas Co.
E.C. Barker
Margie Barley
Daniel D. Barnes
E.M. Barnes
Harold Barnes
Randy Barnes
T.T. Barnes
Regenia Barnett
Mack Barrett
Brent Barron
J.R. Barron
Lanny Barron
Ray Barron
C.S. Barrow
Lavonda Bartee
Bartlett Oil & Gas
James I. Barton
Donald Bates
W.D. Bates
Ollie Batson
John L. Bauman
Tim Beal
E.F. Bean
R.J. Bean

Lowell Bearden
Beattie Ch. of Christ
Jan Beck
Roy Beech
G.K. Beeman
Samuel O. Beene
Mrs. Walter Beene
Richard Beighle
Stiles Belcher
George C. Bell
J.L. Bell
Lonnie Bell
Beller Production
Bill Belyew
Darren Belyeu
Bend Arch Oil
L.D. Bender
Steve P. Benifiel
Daniel G. Bennett
Kenneth Bennett
Ramus Bendit
D.V. Benson
Floyd Benson
Gerald Benson
Jay Benson
L.F. Benson
Odell Benson
George A. Bentch
Bentley & Laing
Don H. Bentley
Wayne Bergerson
Ted Bergkamp
Andy Berry
J.B. Berry
Mrs. Marshall Berry
Bob Bertelson
J.B. Bettis
J.C. Bibby
A.L. Bible
Big Country Explor.
Big Four Chemical
Novella M. Bigby
G.C. Bingham

More accounts will be listed in the next *Texas Co-op Power*.

ATTENTION: HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS!

Government-in-Action

Youth Tour

June 12-20

Win a Trip to Washington, D.C.!

Students whose parents or guardians are members of Comanche Electric Co-op may enter the essay contest. Students must have begun their sophomore, junior or senior year in the fall of 2007 to qualify.



2007 Comanche EC Youth Tour Winners
Veronica Hogue and Monique Barrios

Application Deadline January 31

Essay Contest Topic:
“The Advantages of Coal as a Power Source”

For additional information, contest rules
and applications, contact:
Comanche Electric Cooperative
Attn: Shirley Dukes
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P.O. Box 729
Comanche, TX 76442

Phone: 1-800-915-2533 • E-mail: sdukes@ceca.coop

**youth
t**our

ROCKS

dc

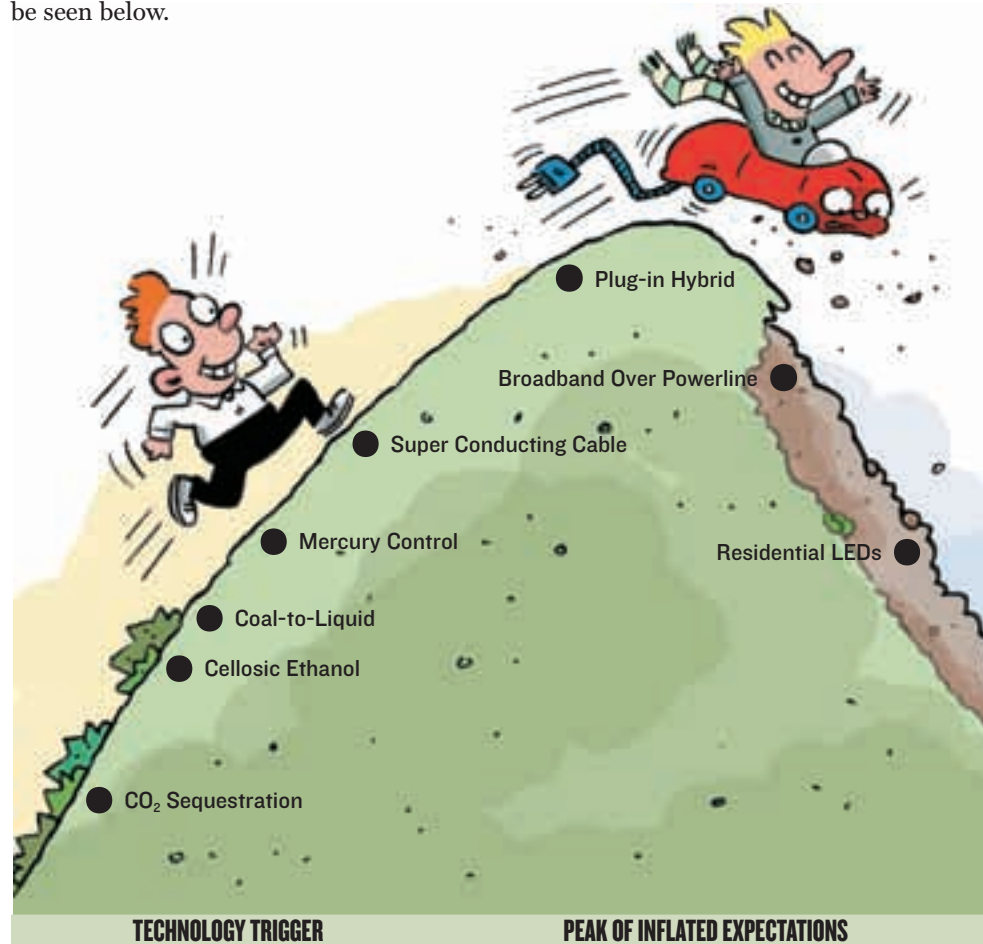
Riding the Wild Technology Cycle

Emerging technologies cycle from inflated expectations, through disillusionment to enlightenment and productivity.

by Kaye Northcott

If it seems to you that the news media hypes unproven technologies, you're right. Inflated expectations come well before a technology is ready for prime time.

Speculation about fuel cells capable of powering automobiles has been bandied about for more than a decade. But they are still experimental. Ed Torrero, executive director of the Cooperative Research Network (CRN), and members of his staff like to demonstrate the life cycle of emerging technologies with a graph showing the tortuous path of a typical technology. A simplified version of the graph can be seen below.



What makes the graph so interesting is that a technology's highest visibility may be at the initial "gee whiz" stage. Some then sink into obscurity never to be heard from again. Weren't we supposed to have flying cars by now? What about robot valets?

The CRN's chart has some catchy phrases. There's the "Trough of Disillusionment," where many technologies go to die. That's followed by a gradual "Slope of Enlightenment" as some technologies become productive.

The initial media buzz may be helpful in attracting research and development programs. "In R&D it's no sin to back a loser," Torrero says. In fact, in the electricity business and other businesses as well, the sin comes in failing to back a winner.

So up, up the excitement rises as media and technology promoters announce prematurely that Product X "is commercial." Then it turns out there are competing technologies and most don't work. Down, down the disappointments push the hopeful new technology. Will Product X enter what CRN labels the "Valley of Death," where our personal robots went to rust? "The simple fact of the matter is that most technologies never get past this point," explains Torrero. "The problems are huge. They are not solvable by the available engineering resources, so the market doesn't grow."

Sometimes the failure is because companies cannot afford to keep producing due to limited sales or an apathetic market or formidable technical problems. Investors cut back on their funding, and the federal government pulls the plug on much-needed grants.

Let's say Product X is lucky enough to come out of the slump. It's due to steady engineering improvements, attractive performance/cost ratio and good sales. Gradually it climbs to a "Plateau of Productivity" as prices stabilize, the manufacturing becomes more automated, improvements are made, and warranties and guarantees are offered. Product X is a good bet—at least until a lower-cost, better-performing competitor appears.

Kaye Northcott is editor of Texas Co-op Power.

TECHNOLOGY MATURITY

HERE AND READY

Renewable Energy

- Wind power
- Landfill gas
- Animal waste-to-electricity

Energy Efficiency

- Compact fluorescent lights
- Energy Star appliances
- Heat pumps

Transportation Fuels

- Ethanol
- Biodiesel

NOT READY FOR PRIME TIME

Renewable Energy

- Utility-scale solar
- Fuel cells
- Hydrogen economy

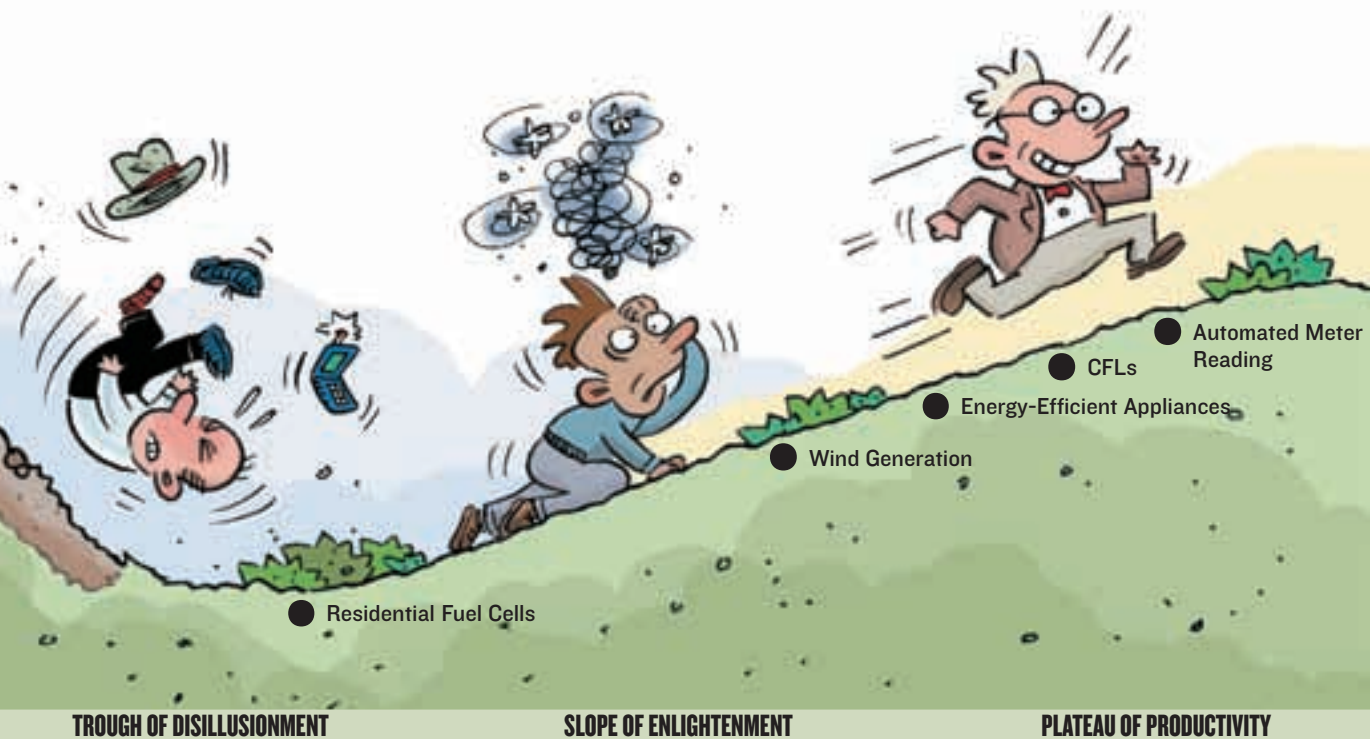
Energy Efficiency

- Smart appliances
- Residential LEDs
- Plug-in hybrid autos

Transportation Fuels

- Cellulosic ethanol
- Coal-to-liquid

SOURCE: ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE TODAY



TROUGH OF DISILLUSIONMENT

SLOPE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

PLATEAU OF PRODUCTIVITY