CECA

National Volunteer Week Co-op Stepping Forward To Help



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

By presidential proclamation, the final week of April has been declared National Volunteer Week. The tradition started in the 1970s under President Richard Nixon and con-

tinues this month under President Barack Obama. The week, in turn, is part of National Volunteer Month, which highlights volunteers and volunteer opportunities across the country.

But at CECA, every month is volunteer month. You see, electric cooperatives, like other cooperative businesses, are founded on a set of principles. Those include Principle No. 7, Concern for Community.

That principle states that cooperatives should strive to make the communities in which they do business better places to live.

CECA fulfills that ideal by supporting volunteer organizations that make our community better and encouraging the volunteer efforts of our employees.

Your co-op is made up of people who care. Our employees go out of their way to better the communities in which they live. They coach youth sports teams, serve on school committees and participate in church activities. They volunteer their time to raise money for charitable organizations such as American Cancer Society's Relay For Life, The Salvation Army and Santa's Helpers. And they serve on community boards for such organizations as Chamber of Commerce and the Lions and Kiwanis clubs. They are co-op members like you, and, like you, they want to make their hometowns stronger.

We also make it easier for our members to help others by supporting area organizations and causes through the Operation Round Up program. The program, in which members' participation is voluntary, rounds up electric bills to the nearest dollar, and the extra change is put in a fund.

The money amounts to about \$6 per person per year, but when gathered with donations from other participating members and awarded to charitable organizations, it can make a big difference. The CECA Operation Round Up program donates annually to volunteer fire departments, Project Graduation in all schools within our service territory, local Relays For Life, food pantries and Santa's Helper-type programs. It also donates to families who have lost their homes in a fire or flood. These are only a few examples of the many charitable and individual donations provided through the program.

We would like to encourage you to join us in volunteering your time, money or both to help those in our communities who need it most. Whether it's organized by a national group such as the Red Cross or the United Way, or through local organizations, such as houses of worship or food banks, there is no shortage of opportunities.

Volunteering during National Volunteer Month and year-round is one of the things that sets our cooperative form of business apart. We are part of this community and we want to see it succeed.



CECA

P.O. Box 729 Comanche, TX 76442

Operating in Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills, Shackelford and Stephens counties

HEADQUARTERS

201 W. Wrights Ave. Comanche, TX 76442

EASTLAND OFFICE

1311 W. Main St. Eastland, TX 76448

EARLY OFFICE

1801 CR 338 Early, TX 76801

OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Eastland closed from noon to 1:15 p.m. Early closed from 1 to 2 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.



CONTACT US

CALL US (325) 356-2533 local or 1-800-915-2533 toll-free FIND US ON THE WEB Ceca.coop

The Rise of a New Era 1945–55

Part IV of Comanche Electric Cooperative History

BY SHIRLEY DUKES



Eventually the war came to an end, and life in the United States gradually began to return to a more normal state. Now that many of the war restrictions had been lifted, powerline construction that had been put on hold due to the war effort would continue—but would cause a strain on the manpower of the cooperative. Materials would take 12 to 14 months for delivery, and poles would be almost impossible to come by.

The board of directors at that time was: W.S. Price Jr., president, Gustine; W.S. Clark, vice president, Blanket; J.D. Guy, secretary/treasurer, Carbon; G.F. Caraway, Energy; L.W. Garmon, Brownwood; A.N. Lancaster, May; and Edd Townsend, Nimrod.

With the sudden increase in production, the board resolved to borrow additional money in the amount of \$50,000 from the United States of America to "construct and operate additional electric transmission, distribution and service lines, together with all necessary appurtenances, in rural areas in one or more of the counties of Brown, Callahan, Comanche, Eastland, Mills and Stephens ..." This loan would bear an interest rate of "two per cent per annum, providing for the payment of the indebtedness evidenced thereby within 35 years after the date thereof." In September of that same year, another \$261,000 was borrowed under the same terms.

The latter part of that year, due to the growth in the northern territory and distance from the main office, the board gave approval for a lineman to be placed in the Eastland area to maintain those lines.

After postponement of the January 1945 annual meeting due to the war, plans were made for said meeting. Mrs. J.D. Helm and Mrs. W.S. Price Jr. of the REA Ladies Club were invited to assist in planning the lunch, and it was decided that for the first time the cooperative would give attendance prizes.

This meeting was held August 18, 1945, at Lake Eanes Park in Comanche. Two hundred five members were in attendance, constituting a quorum. At that time, all seven directors were elected each year. Twelve members were nominated for the seven director seats. However, there would be no upset in this election, and all seven of the incumbents were re-elected for an additional term. The chairman then presented to the members a proposed amendment to the corporate charter of the cooperative providing for the election of directors in staggered terms. However, not being adopted by a majority of ALL members of the cooperative, it was declared defeated.

A contract with Freese and Nichol, project engineers, which provided for a voltage and regulation study and a sectionalizing study on the D-1 Section of the project that had been placed on hold, was reinstated in its entirety. For some reason that is not clear to us today, the REA in Washington would not approve the D-1 Section. After much discussion as to the cost of construction per member, upon motion made by Mr. Garmon and seconded by Mr. Townsend, the board voted to construct the D-1 Section by force account rather than through the obtaining of bids and letting of contracts, as it appeared to be impossible to secure bids satisfactory to the Rural Electrification Administration. But this section of line would be met with many obstacles. Material was hard to come by, which would temporarily slow construction. And in Stephens County, the cooperative encountered some resistance in securing right-of-way easements. But even with the unexpected delays, the project was able to stay ahead of the engineers' estimated schedule.



This would be the year that CCECA declared that maps were imperative to the operation of the cooperative, and thanks to J.H. Flood Engineers of Waco, the linemen would soon have their first set of working maps for the lines of the cooperative.

In June 1946, the directors held a discussion concerning all consumers who had been connected at an increased minimum. After investigating the records, they found that the present density per mile was sufficient to pay the cooperative out at a standard minimum of \$2.45 per consumer. At that time the board voted and resolved that "all consumers connected at an increased minimum have their minimums lowered to the regular minimum of \$2.45 per 25 kilowatt-hours per month."

It was around this time that the problem of "spite lines" finally came to a head. Before the organization of the Rural Electrification Administration, public power companies had no desire to serve the rural areas because there was no profit in it due to the lack of density in those areas. Public power companies became interested in the rural areas only after the farmers had formed cooperatives and obtained government loans to build lines into areas that the private companies had previously ignored.

Cooperatives were only allowed to build into rural areas that did not have available power from the public companies. The public companies began building spite lines into territories, many times dead lines that served nothing, in an effort to prevent cooperatives from developing there. In addition, these power companies had begun "waging a bitter, relentless, unfair fight against the Brazos River Transmission Electric Cooperative, for the past several years, same having culminated in a recent series of newspaper attacks, and many material misrepresentations of facts have been circulated and published by representatives of the Private Power Trust, to the general public and to our public officials, including our representatives in Congress."

In an effort to dispense of this widespread problem in our nation, as well as in our service territory, the CCECA Board of Directors dispatched a letter to the U.S. congressmen in Washington, D.C., stating "that we most earnestly request our representatives in Congress to make a careful investigation of the attacks that are now being waged against the REA and the cooperatives of the state, as well as the motives therefor," and "that our representatives in Congress be earnestly implored to support the REA, and to oppose efforts of the Private Power Trust and individual private power companies to amend the Rural Electrification Act by eliminating the rights of the farmers to own their own transmission and generating facilities."

The annual meeting for 1947 was held on August 15 at Lake Eanes Park. Members brought picnic lunches, with drinks and pickles being provided by the cooperative. Forty-two gifts donated from various vendors were given as door prizes through a drawing. Mrs. J.D. Farrar of Comanche was the grand prizewinner of a Westinghouse refrigerator. Caron Loretta Gandy, 2 months old, was the recipient of a teddy bear as the youngest person in attendance. J.W. Powers, 89 years old, received a box of candy as the oldest person present. The 498 members in attendance elected as their directors for the coming year: W.S. Clark, L.W. Garmon, G.F. Caraway, Edd Townsend, A.N. Lancaster, Dewey Hames and Walter Chapman.

Once again, the cooperative had outgrown its current building. Rather than continue to lease, the board voted to build. Property was purchased at 201 Wrights Ave. in Comanche from John and Dorothy Robertson. In April 1948, the board approved a resolution to request \$85,000 for the purpose of constructing an office building and material and truck storage, and \$7,500 for the purpose of constructing additional storage for trucks and equipment. However, it was not to be an easy process.

The process of securing approval from REA dragged on for years. It was not until 1951 that an REA representative finally came before the board and suggested that the board reconsider the decision, as he felt it would not be possible for CCECA to secure enough steel and copper for the building.

The project was put on hold until January 1954, when detailed plans and specifications were presented and the board made plans to once again request approval from Rural Electrification Administration. On March 27, 1954, the contract for construction of the new Comanche County Electric Cooperative headquarters building was awarded to Ross and Sons of Brownwood, the low bidders with a bid of \$53,490. In 1955, CCECA moved into the new headquarters building in Comanche, where







it still resides today, 58 years later. By late 1949, it was brought to

CCECA's attention that other utility companies were building line into the northwestern part of the CCECA service project. Ory J. Grigsby, manager of the cooperative, discussed this matter with officials in Washington and was advised that the cooperative should take immediate action to construct the 80 miles of line in question by force account.

By the end of that same year, the momentous decision was made to adopt capital credits, a benefit of membership that is still carried out today.

In 1950, the co-op saw a long list of historic events. In January came the opening of the Brazos River Transmission Electric Cooperative's first generating system, the W.R. Poage Generating Plant. The 1953 the Brazos Annual Report boasted that the cost of power from the Poage Plant was the lowest of any cooperative-owned electric steam-generating plant in the nation, and twice received government commendations for its efficiency.

In February came the organization of a program that would be supported by CCECA: a telephone cooperative. Five of the cooperative board members traveled to Austin for a Texas Power Reserve meeting with the Legislature to create laws that would allow telephone cooperatives to be formed in Texas. Through the cooperative's attorney, a letter was drafted to Allen Shivers, then governor of Texas, requesting the Legislature to call a special session so that telephone cooperatives could operate in the state of Texas.

Among other things, the letter said, "We feel that our people are entitled to be in a position to take advantage of the benefits of the Rural Telephone Loan Program," and "Important as this program is, we urge and respectfully request that you send a further message to the Legislature laying before it the matter of passing an act to provide for the incorporation of rural telephone cooperatives."

CCECA even went so far as to make several loans over the next few years to the telephone cooperative for the purpose of carrying on its office expenses until its loan was released. By January 1954, the telephone cooperative was still encountering difficulty in securing enough equity payments to meet REA requirements before the release of funds for putting the cooperative into operation, as reported by Mr. Webb and Mr. Pettit of Comanche County Telephone Company. Mr. Force, REA field representative, discussed the possibility of CCECA loaning the telephone cooperative an additional \$5,000. Based on the findings of that meeting, CCECA agreed to yet another loan to the telephone cooperative. As best can be determined, CCECA loaned approxi-

mately \$8,000 to the newly formed telephone cooperative for it to function until its loans could be approved.

Also that year, the cooperative had the opportunity to add to its service territory when they were contacted by three cities: 1) Mr. Harold Dobbs and Mr. Stuteville approached the cooperative and expressed their desire for the cooperative to serve the football field in the City of Gustine. A committee was appointed to contact the mayor to discuss the possibility of CCECA acquiring the City of Gustine's territory. 2) The City of Santa Anna contacted the board and the decision was made to enter into a contract with the city for the purpose of supplying water to the city. 3) A group of citizens from Rising Star approached the board, stating that their city was being inadequately served and requesting that CCECA serve their city. It is unclear to us today what obstacles were faced in each of these cities to prevent us from serving them, but apparently there were insurmountable barriers that prevented CCECA from entering those territories, as the co-op does not currently serve any of these cities.

The annual meeting of 1951 was the first and only one ever to be held outside of Comanche. It was held at the National Grand Armory in Cisco on December 14, 1951. However, a portion of the membership contested the election of three of those directors, resulting in a specially called annual meeting in February 1951 to clear up the matter. As a result of that meeting, several new policies were put in place for the cooperative, and proxy voting was discontinued.

At the end of 1951, the cooperative had 5,783 connected members, 2,264 miles of energized line, and an operating revenue of \$25,908. REA was the cooperative banker at that time. All payments to the government had been made either on time or before they came due, and the cooperative had \$50,000 advance credit with REA and government bonds valued at \$50,000.

In early 1952, resignations were received from Ory J. Grigsby, manager of CCECA, and Frederick G. Harmon, legal counsel for the cooperative. Howell Cobb was retained as counsel for the cooperative at \$25 per month. After an extensive search for a new general manager, and after interviewing a good number of applicants, W.J. Parks, manager of the PR&W Electric Cooperative in Wamego, Kansas, was hired as general manager for Comanche County Electric Cooperative at a salary of \$450 per month.

The annual meeting of 1952 was once again held at Lake

Eanes Park. In addition to the serious business of the meeting, the cooperative also hosted an irrigation display in which Rea Hoff displayed a turbine type of irrigation pump. An amateur talent contest was held, with Doris and Lejeune Smith declared the winners. Texas A&M student Dick O'Neal staged the "Electric Wonders Show." There was musical entertainment by vocalist Dottie Carlson and guitarist Clyde Arnold, a comic juggling and magic act by Bozo the Great, and Madame Ray's trained animal act.

Miscellaneous Statistics

As of August 16, 1945, the cooperative had a total net worth of \$84,120. In December of that year, the board resolved to continue the cooperative's contract to purchase electric power and energy from Brazos River Transmission Electric Cooperative.

The year 1946 would see an escalation in construction, beginning in January when J. Briscoe, contractor from Stillwater, Oklahoma, was awarded the bid for the construction of approximately 261 miles of electrical transmission and distribution line at a bid of \$218,813. By the end of the year, a pre-allotment had been completed on Section K with a total of 517.6 miles of line.

By February 1947, the board had come to the conclusion that the issues concerning Section K needed to be addressed and resolved. REA had requested that Section K be divided in two parts; the first section being known as K Section and the second part as L Section.

The board resolved to request sufficient funds with which to construct 251.8 miles of electric distribution lines to serve 531 members and 81 prospective members to be designated as K Section, and 291.7 miles of electric distribution lines to serve 526 signed members and 77 prospective members to be designated as the L Section. The amount requested for K Section was \$10,000 for equipment and \$72,000 for member extensions, including work orders already approved in the amount of \$23,480. The amount requested for L Section was \$50,000 for new equipment and \$50,000 for member extensions.

In 1947, business with Brazos River Transmission Electric Cooperative began to progress again. The board approved CCECA Manager Ory J. Grigsby to vote and propose that Brazos continue to build transmission lines and steam generation plants, as was first set out by its project. The board also requested \$100,000 in additional money to build tie-in lines and for reconversion in connection with the Brazos line. In October, 103 miles of L Section, serving 240 members, was energized for a cost of \$850 to \$900 per mile. It was also in this year that plans for the first CCECA substation to be built at Downing were also being discussed.

Line construction picked up during this time as well. In April of that year, the board approved construction of 300 miles of electric distribution lines to serve 618 signed members and 50 prospective members to be designated as the N Section. In August the D Line Section was completed, with 249 miles of line having been built at \$885 per mile.

The years 1948 and 1949 brought additional new growth in the form of 292 miles of construction in the M Section, number of members affected unknown; 197 miles of construction to serve 348 signed members and 54 prospective members in O Section; 202 miles of distribution line to serve 387 signed members and 41 prospective members in the S Section; 250 miles of electric distribution lines to serve 368 signed members and 70 prospective member in the T Section; and a metering point was built in Carbon.

As of December 1955, employees of CCECA were: Richard C. Armstrong, Clarisse Adams, Cecil Alford, Sallie Bishop, McCoy Bradshaw, Charles P. Couch, Freda M. Ellis, C.C. Fritts, C.G. Fritts, A.E. Guy, Ellen Kibler, John O. Kirkland, Carol Littlejohn, Ray Marlin, J.R. Murphree, Milton McNutt, Bonita Otwell, W.G. Parker, W.J. Parks, Myrtle Parsons, Aubrey Patton, L.G. Sledge, C.D. Stovall, C.R. Thomas, Roy Turner, J.E. Watson, H.J. Woolsey and Barbara Wood. The directors were: Jimmie Foreman, Bertie R. McCorkle, Troy B. Pettit, Macon Richmond, Paul Roberts, William B. Starr and Joe D. Weedon.

Join us again next month as we delve into the years 1956-65.

'WE PROMISE'

CECA HAS A PURPOSE: To power communities and empower members to improve the quality of their lives. We do this by providing you with quality electric service and exceptional commitment to our members through the service we provide. In an effort to prove to you our dedication to this purpose, our employees make a promise to you to always be there for you.



'I promise to always answer your calls with a smile, and to ensure that all your questions and needs are promptly answered.'

KAY SLAVENS is the customer service representative in our Eastland office and has been with CECA for six years. Hers is one of the voices you will hear when your call is answered and is the face you will see at the Eastland drive-through or when you walk into the office.



Pictured above are members of the Park Enhancement Group of Comanche.

'CECA helps us improve our community through their volunteer efforts and through their donations. Thank you, CECA for helping making our children's park safe for our kids.'

-PEG's Brandi Riley

PARK ENHANCEMENT GROUP OF

COMANCHE is a nonprofit created by a group of parents on a mission to enhance the Comanche City Park. With help from CECA, the park's equipment has been greatly enhanced. Stop by to see Cooperative Principle No. 7, Concern for Community, at work.

Do You Have an Unclaimed Check?

Numerous checks that were mailed to CECA members in payment of capital credits 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 know the correct address or phone number of anyone listed on these pages, please have them call Nancy Isham at 1-800-915-2533 or email nisham@ceca.coop.

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3omyn Pipeline D AEC Oil **AKO Production** ARC Truck AWS Petroleum Aaron, Pearl Ables, MR Ables, Frank E Abraham, Rick Achemire, Roy & Judy Acuña, Domingo Adair, James H Adams, Billy Adams, Carl Ray Adams, Charles E Adams, David Adams, EA Adams, JV Adams, Jolly Adams, Kay Adams, Myron L Adams, RD Adams, Mrs. Roy A Adams, WW Adcock, Floyd Adcom Oil & Gas Adobe Oil & Gas Agerton, Tom L Agnew, James R Aguilor, Lupe Jr. Aguirre, GS Ainsworth, Calvin Ainsworth, JA Akins, ME Alamo Explosives Inc. Alaska Coastline Prod Alcorn, James I Aldridge, AF Aldridge, DB Aldridge, JL Alexander Land & Cattle Alexander, MH Alexander, WE Alford, JM Alford, Lenorah Alford, Mack G Alfred, E Maurice Algiere, Angelo Allcorn, JB Allday, Mel Allen, Dorothy Allen, Earl L Allen, Jesse Allen, John E Allen, Leland Allen, WC Allen, WE Allgood, Eual Sr. Allgood, Eual Jr. Allgood, Joe Allgood, Ronald

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