

# Let Your Voice Be Heard



**MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY**

**Early next month—at noon on January 8, to be exact—the 83rd Texas Legislature will convene for its biennial session.**

The senators and representatives that you and I send to Austin have the unenviable task of writing the laws that govern our state.

When they are deciding which issues to tackle and how to craft legislation to address those issues, lawmakers hear plenty of advice. Interest groups, lobbyists and opinion leaders all weigh in, and those voices carry substantial influence. But the voices that might matter most to the busy men and women in the legislative branch are yours, the constituents who elect them to office.

That's why it is important for you to be involved in the process, to let your elected representatives know what you want from state government and what they should do to serve your interests.

Through Texas Electric Cooperatives, our statewide organization, your interests as a member of Comanche Electric Cooperative are communicated in Austin. But from time to time, we may enlist your help in relaying those messages, because your opinion as a constituent can have a significant influence on the lawmaking process. That's why in some situations, we may ask you to chime in on issues that could ultimately affect your access to dependable and affordable electricity.

You can communicate with your senator and representative in many ways, some more effective than others. When you decide an issue is important enough to speak up, remember that the most convenient way of sending a message is sometimes the least effective.



**A face-to-face visit with your legislators, whether in Austin or at their local offices, is the best way to let them know what is important to you.**

Writing an email or, better yet, a letter to your legislator is a much more effective way of getting your point across. The fact that you took the time and effort to put your thoughts into your own words makes those words more valuable.

The rise of Internet communication has made it easy for people to sign online petitions or post messages on social networks either supporting or opposing a policy. But those forms of political speech, dubbed "slacktivism" by critics, don't hold that much sway with decision-makers simply because it's too easy to merely push a button.

But the best way to let lawmakers know how you feel might be a face-to-face visit. There's no need to drive to Austin, though. Lawmakers often return home during the legislative session specifically to meet with their constituents. Those visits present a fine opportunity to let them know what you think.

The continuing viability of our electric cooperative may be affected by policies set in Austin and in Washington next year. If we bring an issue to your attention, we urge you not to sit on the sidelines, but instead to get involved and help us keep your cooperative healthy.

## 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](mailto: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](http://ceca.coop)**



▲ Members are welcomed to CECA's 74th annual meeting.

A special "Thank you!" to Clark Tractor for the use of Gators to transport members from the parking lot to the annual meeting site. ▼



▲ Setting up for the health fair



▲ The 'Big Tent' provided ample cover from occasional rain sprinkles for the more than 600 attendees at the CECA 74th Annual Meeting of the Members.

Each member received a goody bag complete with an energy-efficiency kit, an ice cream scoop and The CECA Member Cookbook, Volume I. ►



## Cool Day Greet Annual Meeting Attendees

Almost 300 members attended Comanche Electric Cooperative's 74th Annual Meeting on October 13 at Comanche City Park. As it turns out, October is a great time of the year to hold an annual meeting outdoors! The day was cool, cloudy and overcast, and rain threatened several times during the morning. But with the protection of the "Big Tent," no one seemed to care. In fact, they urged it on!

Registration for the event began at 9 a.m. Each member received a goody bag filled with energy-efficiency items, a much-sought-after ice cream scoop and the favorite: Comanche Electric Cooperative's first member-only publication, The CECA Member Cookbook, Volume I. During the reg-

istration hour, members could check out the health fair or visit the refreshment booth for cold drinks and popcorn and enjoy the entertainment as The Class of '57 played a delightful mix of music from the past, including some country, some rock 'n' roll, and of course, a little Elvis.

The health fair was a huge success. Comanche Medical Clinic delivered 31 flu shots, and Abilene Regional Medical Center did 60 cholesterol checks. Air Evac made a big entrance when its air ambulance set down on the baseball field, and Ruth Tippie had her massage chair on hand to provide free massages to about 30 grateful members!

Also at the health fair were: Comanche Community Medical Center, Lee Health Care, Comanche Nutrition, Comanche

Air Evac was a big hit when its air ambulance set down on the baseball field between the annual meeting tent and the Little League field. ▼



Boy Scout Troop 67 from Comanche presented the colors and led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. ►



Members serve up favorites such as fish and chicken and all the fixings from Cook's Fish Barn. ▼



The Class of '57 returned for a repeat performance of upbeat and fun music, featuring a little bit of country and a little bit of rock 'n' roll. ►



◀ Adriona Alderman led the members in singing the National Anthem.

EMS, Comanche Health Care, Comanche Hospice, Oak Ridge Manor, Western Hills Nursing Home, White Stone, Juice Plus and the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

Youth Tour winners Lucchese Gordon of Zephyr and Jennifer Garcia of Dublin thanked the membership for the honor and privilege of representing them in Washington, D.C. Both young ladies gave exceptional speeches and descriptions of the tour.

Next, CECA General Manager Alan Lesley addressed the membership. "No one else was up to the challenge," Lesley said, "but Comanche Electric Cooperative's founding members—folks like you and me—took it on, tackling the feat of bringing power and hope to rural America by forming electric cooperatives.

"Our rich history is just the beginning. The impacts of cooperatives are far from finished. Whenever a community faces a need—a challenge to make life better—the cooperative busi-

ness model comes into play. By putting people first and innovating to meet member needs, cooperative enterprises build a better tomorrow."

Lesley went on to describe the cooperative model, as well as what CECA has done to adhere to that model and build a better tomorrow. The text of Lesley's speech can be found on Page 20.

All speakers kept their part of the meeting short and sweet so members could get to the food faster. And as usual, J.C. Cook of Cook's Fish Barn did not disappoint! There were 632 people who stood in line to get a plate of the best fish and chicken around.

If you missed the 74th annual meeting of the membership, CECA encourages you to make plans now to attend next year, when CECA celebrates its 75th anniversary amid fanfare and special events. Thank you to everyone who attended: You are truly what CECA is all about.

# Message to the Members

Here is the speech General Manager Alan Lesley delivered at the annual meeting

## Good morning and welcome to the Annual Meeting of Members at Comanche Electric Cooperative.

We're here today because we believe in the benefits of a community working together. We know we're stronger and can accomplish more when we're united—that's what makes the cooperative business model so great. When we cooperate with each other—pool our resources and focus on a goal—we can do anything.

Together, through co-ops like Comanche Electric Cooperative, we build a better tomorrow.

Electric cooperatives are different from other businesses you deal with, and we're not alone. There are 29,200 co-ops of all kinds across America, and more than 1 billion co-op members around the world. We all share a common set of principles and values, including self-help and democracy.

Co-ops take many forms, from farmers banding together to get a fair price on supplies to credit unions delivering low fees and reasonable rates. The business model works for dairy farmers and small-business owners, financial institutions, grocery stores, and electric companies. Co-ops form to fill a community need, giving a voice to folks that profit-driven businesses often overlook.

Electric cooperatives may only serve 12 percent of American consumers, but our lines cover 75 percent of this great nation. By banding together, we deliver power to 42 million Americans in 47 states.

Our history demonstrates how we can build a better tomorrow together. Seventy four years ago, nearly 90 percent of our rural ancestors were living in the dark—forced to rely on iceboxes or spring houses to cool food, kerosene lamps for lighting, wood stoves for cooking, and fetching water from wells. The reason: The big, investor-owned utilities had decided there was no profit to be made by extending power lines into the countryside to hook up farms and small towns.



CECA GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

That's where the co-op business model came into play.

No one else was up to the challenge, but Comanche Electric Cooperative's founding members—folks like you and me—took it on, tackling the feat of bringing power and hope to rural America by forming electric cooperatives.

Our rich history is just the beginning. The impacts of cooperatives are far from finished.

Whenever a community faces a need—a challenge to make life better—the cooperative business model comes into play. By putting people first and innovating to meet member needs, cooperative enterprises build a better tomorrow.

This year, 2012, has been declared the International Year of Cooperatives. It's a chance for us to celebrate our legacy of innovation and to remind us of what's important in business—putting people first.

Co-ops exist to meet the needs of our members. Period. That's why you're here today. You know that as a member of Comanche Electric Cooperative, you set our priorities and elect leaders from among your ranks to lead the co-op on our board of directors. These men and women work hard to make our community stronger and sustainable.

One key to our community's strength lies within the opportunities our children have to succeed. That's why we support the Rural Electric [Government-in-Action] Youth Tour. This summer we sent two high school juniors to our nation's capital to learn about leadership, teamwork, electric co-ops and the ideals our nation was founded on: You'll hear from them a little later.

We also provided six \$1,000 scholarships to send local students to college last year, continuing our commitment to support our future leaders.

Because we are a cooperative, we know we can't do it all on our own. That's why we cooperate with you through our Operation Round Up Program. Together we've donated more than \$287,000 since the program began in 2003. On behalf of the people whose lives have been changed through your generosity: Thank you.

Because we put people first, our rates are set simply to cover the cost of doing business, not to generate profits for distant stockholders. In fact, you get the credit when our revenues exceed costs. I'm proud to report just this September, and for the second straight year, your board of directors retired \$350,000 back to you to cover allocated margins for prior years.

Capital credits and our support for the community are just a few more ways that electric cooperatives are building a better tomorrow.

During the International Year of Cooperatives, we also want to celebrate our legacy of innovation.

Co-ops adapt quickly to change, and we work together—cooperatively—to find solutions to improve service for you, our members. That's the power of cooperation.

Innovation takes many forms, from energy efficiency and renewable energy efforts to transforming the electric grid. Each innovative step forward builds a better community for all of us.

Our energy-efficiency programs help you manage your energy use. We've outlined our EcoPower Rebate program in your annual report. Many members have already taken advantage of these rebates, and I encourage you to do this as well. We provide many online resources to help you become more energy conscious. Whether you're sealing your air ducts, replacing old appliances or improving your home's insulation, it's amazing to watch how the little changes can add up to big savings on your electric bill. We also offer home energy audits to make sure you're getting the best value out of the energy you use every month.

Finally, we are currently laying the groundwork to employ state-of-the-art solutions like our advanced metering infrastructure system. This technology will allow us to pinpoint outages and reroute power when needed, help us control operating costs and improve service reliability. Additionally, we've just completed much-needed upgrades to our mapping system to give our linemen and meter technicians easy-to-access and accurate information in the field. These additions of new technology help us keep your electric bills affordable by improving our efficiency.

Electric co-ops are using energy-efficiency programs and investments in technology to build a better tomorrow.

Co-ops put people first.

We're innovative.

We're leaders in the utility industry.

And around the world, co-ops form a global network of independent, local businesses owned by those they serve.

On behalf of the board of directors and the employees of CECA, thank you for joining us as we celebrate the International Year of Cooperatives and the impact co-ops make on our lives. By uniting neighbors and friends to meet common needs, cooperative enterprises like Comanche Electric Cooperative build a better tomorrow.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR

# Annual Meeting Prizewinners

**PRIZE**

- \$100 Electric Service
- \$100 Electric Service
- \$100 Electric Service
- \$100 Electric Service
- Crock-Pot
- Blender
- \$100 Tractor Supply Gift Card
- \$100 Electric Service
- \$100 Electric Service
- Mr. Coffee
- Heavy-Duty Screwdriver
- Blu-Ray Disc Player
- Single-Cup Brewing System
- \$100 Tractor Supply Gift Card
- Rechargeable Work Light
- \$100 Cabela's Gift Card
- Rechargeable Work Light
- \$100 Electric Service
- \$100 Walmart Gift Card
- 500-Watt Work Light
- Blu-Ray Disc Player
- Barbecue Tools
- Mr. Coffee
- Lasko Heater
- Black & Decker Jigsaw
- 250-Watt Work Light
- Rechargeable Work Light
- Comfort Zone Heater
- Black & Decker Blower
- Sunbeam Heater
- 52-Inch Ceiling Fan
- Patton Heater
- Microwave
- Brazos Lamp
- 32-Inch TV
- 42-Inch TV

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- Irby—Chance Anderson
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- Insurance Network—Patty Brown
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- Cain Electric—Jake Williams
- HD Supply—Jason Leake
- HD Supply—Jason Leake
- Insurance Network—Patty Brown
- Elliott Electric—Brad Lewis
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- WESCO—Bob Tate
- Brazos Electric Cooperative
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**AWARDED TO**

- Kari Robertson
- Alvin Novak
- Russell Davis
- Thomas Lee
- M.L. Green
- Tommy R. Ethridge
- Allen J. Gastinger
- Gene Wilson
- Patricia Ann Brown
- Dolores Cox Pluckhahn
- H.W. Thomas
- James Fogal
- Marvin Gresham
- David Lee Jones
- Freddie E. Couch
- Larry F. Wheeler
- William Z. Kirkland
- Glenn D. Hall
- Robert Kleen
- Bruce Spruill
- Raymond Hale
- Henry M. Hohertz
- Jerry Damron
- Bonita Whitting
- Stacy McNeely
- Norman Probst
- Edward Hallmark
- Juanita L. Brown
- L.E. Dorsey
- Jeanette Luckie
- Arthur Coker
- Martha Ann McCain
- L.R. Wheat
- Joan Murry
- Paul Jackson
- Douglas Brown



# Service Awards

CECA realizes that our employees are our greatest asset. Each year, we recognize those who have reached five-year milestones. These employees were honored at CECA's 74th annual meeting for providing exceptional service to the membership and the cooperative.

**35 YEARS**



**BILLY HENRY**

**30 YEARS**



**EDDIE STRUBE**

**25 YEARS**



**GEORGE CAMPBELL**



**LARRY HATLEY**

**15 YEARS**



**BRENDA CARROLL**

**10 YEARS**



**GREG BEATY**

**10 YEARS**



**ORACIO LOPEZ**



**TOMMY PATTERSON**

**5 YEARS**



**GUY CLAWSON**



**RACHEL FORD**

**5 YEARS**



**JOSH HONEA**



**JUSTIN RILEY**



**SCOTT RUTLEDGE**



**ADAM TALLEY**



# Conservation Matters

THE LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT ENERGY CONSERVATION FROM YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Deck the Halls with Cost-Saving, Energy-Efficient Lighting

BY ANGELA PEREZ

**When one goes out, they all go out, right?**

Wrong, if you use light-emitting diodes to do your holiday decorating. These hardy, energy-saving lights are guaranteed to give you one less thing to worry about so you can better focus on the joys of the season. Why are LED holiday lights better than traditional bulbs? Comanche Electric Cooperative tells you why.

▶ LEDs are now on par with traditional bulbs. Gone are the days when LED holiday lights were known for a harsh white light or stark colors that created a less-than-magical atmosphere. These days, LEDs come in warm, inviting colors in a variety of light beam patterns and dimming options, giving you lots of creative ways to decorate.

▶ LEDs last longer than traditional lights. In fact, they have an operational life span of about 20,000 hours, enough to last for many holiday seasons. Also,

the lights don't have glass or filaments, which makes them durable and resistant to breaking. And because LED bulbs are so strong, one individual outage generally doesn't darken the whole strand. For those enthusiastic decorators who like to blanket their entire house and yard in holiday lights, LEDs could save hours of painstaking work each year by eliminating the need to replace individual bulbs.

▶ LEDs use less energy, which means less strain on your first winter electric bill. Running LEDs on one 6-foot Christmas tree for 12 hours a day for 40 days can save 90 percent or more energy when compared to traditional incandescent lights.

▶ Because they use less energy, LEDs make it safer to connect multiple strands end-to-end without overloading the wall socket. Also, they're cool to the touch, reducing the risk of fire.

Look for brands and manufacturers of Energy Star-qualified LED decorative light strings at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).



### Life before electricity?

Shoot an interview with someone who remembers those days. You could win

# \$1500

#### STUDENTS

Make your own YouTube video and you could win a cash prize!

#### TEACHERS

Win \$1000 for your school by sponsoring the grand prizewinner.

## TEXAS CO-OP POWER

CO-OP TEENS POWER TEXAS

[TexasCoopPower.com](http://TexasCoopPower.com)

OPEN TO STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12!

GENERAL ELECTRIC



Holiday LEDs boast numerous benefits over traditional incandescent bulbs, including a variety of vibrant colors and big savings on your electric bill.



# Happy Holidays!

**CECA wishes you and yours a joyful holiday season.**

*Our offices will be closed Monday and Tuesday, December 24-25, so our employees may enjoy time with their families. In the event of an outage, crews will be on standby.*

