

# Youth Tour: Shaping Our Youth for 50 Years



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER ALAN LESLEY

### THE GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION YOUTH TOUR

just turned 50! And oh, what a tour it's been.

"I love this trip. Every year is a new adventure," says Esther Dominguez, the Texas delegation's statewide Youth Tour coordinator.

Youth Tour brings together teens from 43 states (about 120 students from Texas) for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: a week in Washington, D.C. Students visit monuments and museums and get to know the roots of American history. They meet their congressional representatives and learn about electric co-ops and political advocacy. They dance on a boat cruising down the Potomac River. They live in close quarters for up to a week and are given a small taste of freedom and independence. They sleep little and talk a lot.

### Honor and a Blessing

For those accepted into the Youth Leadership Council, the Youth Tour experience is even richer. These students—one representative from each participating state—work in the congressional action center at the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting. They also participate in a special meeting to delve more deeply into leadership and grassroots issues.

"The Youth Tour was life-changing," said Meagan Johnson, the CECA representative who was chosen to join the Youth Leadership Council in 2011. "Through the Youth Tour and my participation in the Youth Leadership Council, I was able to learn about cooperatives on a larger scale and make lifelong friends."

### Labor of Love

For the chaperones and state coordinators, Youth Tour is an enormous amount of work all year long, culminating in just a handful of fun and frantic days each year. Flexibility and being able to roll with the punches are must-haves. But it's a labor of love for most: "Rewarding" is a common refrain heard from those involved in the program, from administrators and coordinators to parents and participants.

"Youth Tour is an amazing opportunity for both the participants and the chaperones," says CECA's Rachel Ford, who has chaperoned the tour twice.

"Our statewide organization coordinates dates and begins planning Youth Tour for the following year as soon as the group returns home. A tremendous amount of preparation is put into the agenda for the following year. There are many places, such as the National Cathedral and the Kennedy Center, that have very long waiting lists for tickets.

"The reward, however, comes when the coordinators see the participants' faces. The anticipation, pictures being taken and smiles are all worth it. As a two-time chaperone, the most incredible feeling is seeing the participants change during this trip.

"There are many places we visit, such as the Arlington National Cemetery, the



**Cy Tongate of Early and Sam Seay of Cisco represented Comanche Electric Cooperative on the 2014 Government-in-Action Youth Tour.**

Vietnam [Veterans] Memorial and the Holocaust [Memorial] Museum, that are incredibly moving and such an enormous part of our nation's history. These students come back to their cities and towns with a much greater respect and appre-

ciation for history. Chaperoning Youth Tour is a rewarding experience where memories are made and friendships are built.”

### Rooted in Politics

The Youth Tour was born from a speech at the 1957 NRECA annual meeting by then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson. An advocate of electric co-ops, he had lobbied for their creation in Texas in 1937. “If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital, where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents,” the future president said.

With that encouragement, Texas electric co-ops began sending summer interns to work in the senator’s Washington, D.C., office. In 1958, an electric co-op in Iowa sponsored the first weeklong study tour of the nation’s capital.

In 1964, the NRECA began to coordinate activities among the state delegations. The first year of the coordinated tour included about 400 teens from 12 states. As word spread over the years, the program grew to more than 1,600 in 2014.

### Lifelong Connections

It’s not uncommon for Youth Tour friends to keep in touch long after everyone’s gone home. Many reconnect in college or in their later careers, sometimes becoming roommates, co-workers, colleagues—and sometimes even spouses. For all the participants, Youth Tour plays a part in forming the people they will become.

“We’re excited to see what our future leaders accomplish,” says Martin Bevins, a Youth Tour chaperone from Texas Electric Cooperatives. “To know that electric cooperatives played a small part in their development is truly something special.”

To find out more about CECA’s participation in the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, visit [ceca.coop](http://ceca.coop).

## CECA AMI Installation Update

**CONTRACT CREWS WITH TEXAS METER DEVICE**, an experienced electric system installation service out of Waco, will install new, updated electric meters in the CECA service area. Crews are currently or will be replacing all of the meters in areas serviced by the Rising Star, Holde and Zephyr substations. This area is depicted in the map at right.

The installation of new meters will cause a brief service disruption lasting no more than a couple of minutes or less, in most cases.

All meters on the CECA system must be changed out. Therefore, each meter location in our service territory will be visited by TMD at some time. As this project progresses, we will continue to inform the CECA membership of where crews are or will be working through notices in Texas Co-op Power.

Should you have any questions or concerns in relation to this project, you may contact CECA’s metering department at 1-800-915-2533 or via email at [meterdata@ceca.coop](mailto:meterdata@ceca.coop).



## 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

### EARLY OFFICE

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Early, TX 76801

### EASTLAND OFFICE

1311 W. Main St.  
Eastland, TX 76448

### 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).



## CONTACT US

### CALL US

**(325) 356-2533** local or  
**1-800-915-2533** toll-free

### FIND US ON THE WEB

[www.ceca.coop](http://www.ceca.coop)

 [facebook.com/CECA.coop](https://facebook.com/CECA.coop)





# CECA Annual Meeting Celebrates 76 Years of Service

**IT WAS COLD. IT WAS WET. IT WAS WINDY.** But that didn't stop Comanche Electric Cooperative's faithful members from attending the CECA 76th Annual Meeting and Fish Fry under the big top at Comanche City Park. More than 300 member families

attended the meeting, receiving energy-efficiency kits and 76th anniversary wood handle grilling spatulas with the CECA logo.

The night before, storms brought the tent down twice, but dedicated employees of CECA and All Seasons Tent Rental





worked through the night and morning to assure that the members would have a dry place for the meeting and the following luncheon.

To keep the members dry, CECA employees ferried them from their vehicles to the tent via golf carts. Musical favorites Class of '57 once again entertained the crowd, in conjunction with a health fair attended by these vendors: Air Evac Lifeteam, American Cancer Society, Brownwood Regional Hospital, Comanche Community Medical Clinic, Chatfield Assisted Living, Goldthwaite Health and Rehab, Maximus-Star Managed Care, Texas Health Steps, Rising Star Nursing Home, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Western

Hills Nursing Home and Whitestone Retirement Home.

The co-op's younger members were well entertained, too. Linemen Aaron Carroll and Keith Steward were on hand with a CECA bucket truck, helping children don yellow hard hats before placing them in the bucket for a short ride up in the air. Carroll and Steward reported listening to the giggles and squeals and having as much fun as the kids. Ashley Griffin with Ashley's Twist and Paint set up under the big tent, painting faces and twisting balloons into various fun shapes including bunnies and giraffes, Spiderman and Ninja Turtles. What great fun for our younger folks!

The official CECA 76th Annual Meeting of the Membership





began with the De Leon Boy Scout Troop 37 presenting the colors and leading the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a rendition of the national anthem led by Carissa Cole.

The main order of business was the election of directors for Districts 2 and 4. Incumbents Pete McDougal and Monty Carlisle were elected by acclamation to serve another term for the members.

In other business, CECA General Manager Alan Lesley spoke to the members about recent improvements to the system to benefit the membership.

Additionally, four employees—Jimmy Cuellar, Jennifer

Hanson, Shelley Thedford and Jerry Strube—received service award pins for reaching milestones in their co-op careers.

The meeting concluded after CECA Member Service Director Doug Erwin, with the assistance of fellow employees, distributed gifts donated by vendors serving CECA. Following the final prize drawing, a group of approximately 600 members and their families eagerly headed to the serving line for the much-anticipated luncheon catered by Cook's Fish Barn.

If you missed this celebration, you certainly missed a good time. Be on the lookout for dates and details for next year's party.



## THE POWER OF MEMBERSHIP: OUR COMMITMENT THROUGH ...

Dependable, affordable  
power that's there for you  
when you need it!

At CECA, we know that dependable, affordable power is important to you. That's why we upgrade our system,



trim trees to avoid  
blinks and outages,  
upgrade our metering  
system, and maintain  
a well-trained staff of  
linemen to meet your  
needs.

We work hard day  
in and day out to  
provide you with the  
level of comfort you

have come to expect. At CECA, you are the reason we  
do what we do.

## Statement of Nondiscrimination

**COMANCHE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended; and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization's programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is the human resource manager. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call 1-800-795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at [ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call 1-866-632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter by mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or by email, [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).



# CECA Student Leadership Conference a Huge Success



**ONE HUNDRED HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS FROM 11 SCHOOLS** in the CECA service territory attended the CECA Student Leadership Conference in November 2014. Each student was chosen based on his or her outstanding leadership abilities. And what an exceptional group they were!

The day began with a series of five leadership activities,

designed to direct the students' minds into the realm of leadership and their individual and team abilities to lead. Each group of students' take on solutions to the problems and exercises was unique and equally capable.

The afternoon exercise required the students from each school to collectively decide on a community action plan and



develop a strategy to bring it to fruition.

The participating schools and their community action projects are:

**Bangs:** Conduct a toy drive to provide a better Christmas for community children.

**Breckenridge:** Clean up around the local lake and park, and put up Christmas lights.

**Brownwood:** Increase school spirit as well as student and community life by assisting students through a school store.

**Comanche:** Work with the economic development corporation to develop a marketing plan to bring a fast-food franchise to Comanche.

**De Leon:** Turn an empty lot next to the city hall into a multi-purpose site for the community.

**Early:** Improve the local environment by starting a recycling program for paper, plastic, glass, aluminum, etc.

**Eastland:** Honor local veterans through a memorial and an exhibit.

**Gorman:** Improve the downtown park area by painting the bathrooms and adding playground equipment and a sand volleyball court.

**Gustine:** Improve the morale of the track team by building a track.

**Mullin:** Project Forget-Me-Not to beautify the community.

**Zephyr:** Bring back the spirit and pride of Zephyr HS by improving the appearance of the campus through landscaping and cleanup projects.

CECA will be following the progress of these students as they forge onward, armed with their ideas and good community action plans. We encourage you to watch what these students are capable of, and participate in their projects by volunteering your time and resources.

A special "Thank you" goes to the Lake Brownwood 4-H Center for their hospitality and to Katy Reynolds, our guest speaker for the day. Also, special thanks go to the following facilitators who took time from their busy schedules to attend the conference and mentor these young people: Krista Munroe, Comanche Chamber of Commerce; Mary Randolph, Suregrow Ag Products; Richard Niblett, Cindy Niblett and Shannon Newport of KYOX Radio; and Jimmy Cuellar, Jesse Morales, Mary Johnson, Rachel Ford and Keith Steward of CECA.