

## Capturing the Wind



**MESSAGE  
FROM  
MANAGER  
JERRY D.  
WILLIAMS**

The concept of harnessing the wind to do work is nothing new in this part of the country. For decades, farmers and ranchers have used windmills to pump underground water to the surface.

The wind power you might see these days is used to power motors that generate electricity.

Some of you might be thinking about installing your own wind generation unit. After all, the wind is a free source of power—all you have to do is put up a generator and start making your own electricity, right? If all you want to do is hook a lightbulb to the apparatus to watch the lightbulb glow, you would be right. Otherwise, it can get rather complicated.

It's advisable before installing any wind generation to research many factors and consider expenses that might not be readily apparent. If your aim is to use a wind generator to cut your electric bill or make money, you might be disappointed.

Installation of a wind generation system that is connected to your house and Lamar Electric's system can affect the safety and reliability of the co-op's distribution system and the quality of power received by your neighbors.

We recommend you call Lamar Electric before you sink your money into a wind generator. We can help you understand the technical requirements for connecting to the electric grid and also help you figure out if it would be a smart investment for your household.

There are several factors you might want to consider before buying a wind power system: How much power do you

use? How much power will the unit generate? How much money do you have to invest? How long do you expect to use the system? What are the maintenance costs? How reliable are the winds where you want to put the generator? How reliable is the particular model of generator you want to buy?

Most models shut down in high wind and don't work in slow wind. What will happen if the wind generator is making more power than you need at that very instant? What happens if the generator is making less power than you need? Can the wind generator work if the power from Lamar Electric goes off? A lot of folks think the wind generator will be good backup power in case of a major storm, like an ice storm. They do not realize the wind generator shuts down if our power goes off.

It is hard to make a good buy without some of the important facts, such as how much wind you have, day after day. In these calculations, average wind speed becomes critical. The best way to determine that speed is to gather measurements at the height your generator is to be situated. That's because the wind speed at 50 to 100 feet above the ground, the height of small wind generators, is different than the wind speed at ground level. And the wind blows at different speeds and directions at different times of the year, or even different times of the day.

Don't get me wrong: People keep asking me if Lamar Electric has any objections to them buying a wind generator. Of course we don't! You are welcome to buy as many wind generators as you can afford. We don't even mind if you hook them into our electric system. We just want it to be done safely. We have a handbook that details what our requirements are to have a safe system that is hooked into our system. Give me a call or e-mail me at [jerry@lamarelectric.coop](mailto:jerry@lamarelectric.coop), and I will send you a copy.

Under some circumstances, electric utilities are required to provide compensation for any excess power you generate. But in Texas, utilities are only required to pay the same price they pay any other power generator—what, in utility jargon, is called "avoided cost." This prevents other members from having to subsidize the cost of power from your generator. Our "avoided cost" is a lot less than your retail rate for a kilowatt-hour (kWh), and we only use this pricing scheme for generators larger than 50 kW.

If you are installing a wind generator at your home that is less than 50 kW, our procedure is really simple. (Most homes use less than 15 kW.) For a unit this small, the amount of excess electricity you will generate is so small that our current policy is to just "net bill." In other words, we simply reduce your bill by the amount of kWh you generate. The amount of kWh you use, minus the amount of kWh you generated yourself, is what we bill you.

Our most successful member-owned wind generator has been averaging about 300 kWh per month. In other words, you could save around \$30 per month on your electric bill. If you pay \$15,000 and have no maintenance, you could break even in about 40 years.

I understand that having your own personal wind generator is a really great conversation piece, and makes a good focal point for a backyard barbecue. Just imagine having the only wind generator in the neighborhood! You could invite friends over and watch it turn. I prefer showing off my garden, but not everyone enjoys a good, fresh tomato like I do.

Remember, even though the wind may be free, the cost of harnessing it can be considerable. BEFORE making a deal to buy a wind power system, call me. If you already have a wind generator, then please invite me to your barbecue.

# Employee Anniversaries



**LARRY BILLS**  
Equipment Operator  
32 years on July 24



**SCOTT SANSOM**  
Safety Coordinator  
21 years on July 24



The offices of Lamar Electric Cooperative will be closed Monday, July 4, in observance of the holiday.

## COUNTRY CORNER EVENTS

**July 1** **Cruisin' The Plaza**—Begins at 5 p.m. around the plaza in downtown Paris.

**July 2** **Celebrate America Parade**—In downtown Paris at 10 a.m.

**July 3** **Rotary Fireworks**—Noyes Stadium in Paris. Begins at dark.

**July 9-10** **Texas ASA State Championship Shoot**—Love Civic Center in Paris. For information, contact Steve at (903) 737-8595.

**July 15** **Municipal Band Concert**—Bywaters Park in Paris at 8:30 p.m. Bring a lawn chair or blanket.

**July 30** **Paris Rodeo Parade**—Downtown Paris at 10 a.m.

**July 30-31** **Valley of the Caddo Museum & Cultural Center "Big Gun & Knife Show"**—Love Civic Center in Paris from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. \$7 at the door.

**Movies in the Park** Market Square in Paris across from Bywaters Park while the park is under construction. Movies begin at dark. Bring your lawn chair or blanket.

July 7 Independence Day

July 14 Toy Story

July 21 The Empire Strikes Back

July 28 Viewers' Choice

*If you have any events that you would like listed for Delta, Lamar or Red River counties, please contact Marci Thompson. Information must be submitted two months in advance for the magazine. E-mail [marci@lamarelectric.coop](mailto:marci@lamarelectric.coop) or call (903) 783-4911.*



**GARRETT BURT**



**LANEY JACKSON**



**JORDAN MALLICOTE**



**HALEY OTTMO**



**DREW PARKER**



**MOLLY PYLANT**



## LEC Awards Scholarships

This year, Lamar Electric Cooperative awarded six \$1,000 scholarships to high school seniors who live in homes served by Lamar Electric. The money that funds the co-op's scholarship program comes from unclaimed deposits or refunds. Texas law allows Lamar Electric to use a portion of these funds for scholarships; otherwise, the money is turned over to the state.

The winners are as follows: **GARRETT BURT**, a home-schooled student, son of Paul and Teresa Burt of the Lake Creek community; **LANEY JACKSON** of Prairiland High School, daughter of Geron and Glenna Jackson of Pattonville; **JORDAN MALLICOTE** of Honey Grove High School, son of Charles and Laurie Mallicote of the Tigertown community; **HALEY OTTMO** of North Lamar High School, daughter of Cecil and Brenda Ottmo of the Caviness community; **DREW PARKER** of Cooper High School, son of Greg and Pam Toon of the Cooper area; and **MOLLY PYLANT** of Prairiland High School, daughter of Jamie and Karen Pittman of Blossom. The six winners can use their scholarship toward an academic degree or certification from an accredited university, college or junior college of their choice.

CONGRATULATIONS  
to Lamar Electric  
Employees' High  
School Graduates!



**JESSIE RECENDIZ**

Son of Jose Recendiz  
Chisum High School



**SHELBY SANSON**

Daughter of Scott Sansom  
North Lamar High School



# Lamar County Stock Show

*LEC Supports Local Youths*

Lamar Electric Cooperative is a proud supporter of the Lamar County Junior Livestock Show. This year was no different than any other: There were lots of excited kids waiting their turn for a spin around the buyer's ring with their prized animals.

The co-op won the bid on the Grand Champion goat. Lamar Electric also sponsored the Reserve Champion rabbit belt buckle.

The Grand Champion goat was shown by Trent Evans of Chisum High School. He is the son of co-op member James Evans from the Brookston community. The Reserve Champion rabbit belt buckle was awarded to Jessica Cowan, a home-schooled student and a member of Lamar County 4-H. She is the daughter of Mark and Rebecca Cowan of Detroit.

We are very proud of these kids and all who participated. Our young people are our future. We must invest the time and effort to teach them about rural living.



## BLOOD DRIVE FOR CARTER TOWNES

**Given by:** Carter BloodCare

**Hosted by:** Lamar Electric Co-op, Paris Fire Department on North Main, Department of Transportation and City of Paris Public Works

**Location:** Lamar Electric Cooperative Parking Lot

**Date:** Tuesday, July 12, 2011

**Time:** Noon to 4 p.m.

In November 2010, Carter was diagnosed with Precursor B-Cell Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (ALL). Carter is the 4-year-old son of co-op members Charlie and Timberley Townes of Clarksville.

Each donor will receive a free compact fluorescent lightbulb and an ice cream scoop from Lamar Electric.

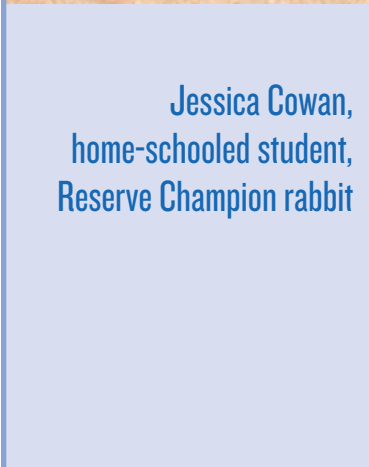
Make sure you eat a good meal before donating!

If you have any questions or want to schedule your appointment for that day, you can contact:

Marci Thompson  
Lamar Electric Co-op  
(903) 783-4911



Trent Evans,  
Chisum High School,  
Grand Champion goat



Jessica Cowan,  
home-schooled student,  
Reserve Champion rabbit

