

You Can Run, But You Can't Hide from Mother Nature



**MESSAGE
FROM
MANAGER
JERRY D.
WILLIAMS**

Last month, a member wrote a response letter to my column about the Dead Tree Patrol. She indicates she has been a supporter of burying the lines since becoming a member two years ago. Her point was the initial expense of burying lines may be greater when weighed against the cost of maintenance, but there would be a savings in the long run, not to mention members not having the headache caused by going without power for long periods of time. In addition, she believes there would be the esthetic value by not cluttering up views of our beautiful East Texas skies. These are good points that certainly deserve an answer.

First, I should point out, I love trees as much as anyone around. Spending 12 months in the desert area of Midland was enough to last me a lifetime. I was raised just north of the Red River in the Kiamichi Mountains.

The biggest misconception most folks have is that underground electric lines last forever and do not need maintenance. If this were true, then why do you still see overhead distribution lines in beachfront towns like Corpus Christi; Destin, Florida; and Gulf Shores, Alabama? All of these towns know it is only a matter of time before a hurricane blows ashore and knocks out those overhead power lines.

The truth is lightning loves underground power lines. Although we have more sophisticated arresters to capture lightning from entering underground lines, they only capture a fraction of the powerful current released by lightning. If lightning would simply go so far down a power line and then blow a hole or melt the wire, the repairs would be so much simpler. Lightning causes something called the treeing effect. Small microscopic pathways are made through the insulating material that looks somewhat like a tree limb with lots of branches. The result is annoying flickers, flutters and blinks that happen weeks later when the weather is perfect. These cause major issues for folks trying to use home appliances containing printed circuit boards and computers. The slight discharge of electrons through these microscopic pathways will dry out any moisture and may not return for days. The cure is replacing a lot of underground wire or having a very expensive silicone substance pumped into that section of wire.

There are many other considerations, such as the expected 25-30 year life of underground cable, compared to 40-60 years for overhead conductors as well as soil conditions and their effect on metal located underground.

Of course, there is the price consideration. The price to install single-phase underground primary (14,400 volt) electric cable is around \$10 per foot compared to overhead wire for about half that price (including poles, etc.). Main three-phase underground circuits cost about three times as much as single phase. Yes, we could consider changing all overhead circuits

to underground primary cable. If we assumed a systematic plan to accomplish this over 10 years, the result would be to double everyone's electric bill. Would anyone really want to increase their \$125 monthly electric bill to \$250 per month for the next 10 years? It doesn't take long to figure out very few of our members would think this is a very good plan. My main task is to improve reliability over the long term, (not hurt it) and provide power at the lowest cost possible, consistent with good business judgment.

When our members need new electric lines installed for a new home, they are given a choice of overhead or underground. Very few are willing to pay the higher cost for underground. This is probably good, because we only have short sections to replace when the underground goes bad in the future.

A cleared right-of-way is still required for underground electric lines. Our trucks and equipment must still have access to the pull boxes, cabinets and other above-ground equipment associated with underground main power lines.

Another consideration would be the cost to transform the high voltage to household current. A pad-mount transformer (used with underground cable) costs about twice the amount as the same size transformer mounted on a pole.

Overhead power lines are susceptible to wind, ice and trees. Underground power lines are susceptible to lightning, people digging and soil conditions. There are major maintenance issues with both overhead and underground electric lines. The bottom line is you can run from Mother Nature, but you cannot hide.

CHECK OUT OUR CONVENIENT BILL PAYMENT OPTIONS AT WWW.LAMARELECTRIC.COOP.

COUNTRY CORNER EVENTS

July 3

Paris Municipal Band Concert and Rotary Fireworks

8:30 p.m., Noyse Stadium in Paris

July 4

Celebrate America Parade

10 a.m., Paris. For more information, call (903) 784-2501.

July 5

Movies in the Park: "Modern Times"

8 p.m., Bywaters Park, Paris. Bring your blanket and lawn chairs. For information, call (903) 784-2501.

July 12

Movies in the Park: "Finding Nemo."

8 p.m., Bywaters Park, Paris. Bring your blanket and lawn chairs. For information, call (903) 784-2501.

July 13

Paris Municipal Band Concert

8:30 p.m., Bywaters Park, Paris. Bring your blanket and lawn chairs.

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. Email marci@lamarelectric.coop or call (903) 783-4911.



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For information during office hours and outages after hours, call **(903) 784-4303** local or **1-800-782-9010** toll-free

Operating in Lamar, Red River, Delta and Fannin counties

Find us on the Web at www.lamarelectric.coop

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Jerry D. Williams

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Mark Jones—Paris

Ron E. Tippit—Clarksville

Mike Williams—Detroit

George M. Wood—Blossom

Lyle Yoder—Pattonville

YOUR "LOCAL PAGES"

This section of Texas Co-op Power is produced by LEC each month to provide you with information about current events, safety, special programs and other activities of the cooperative. If you have any comments or suggestions, please contact the local office.

MEMBER BENEFITS:

- Level billing
- Automated meter reading
- Free bank draft service
- E-Bill
- Visa and MasterCard accepted

Lamar Electric Summer Blood Drive

Given by: Carter BloodCare
Hosted by: Lamar Electric Co-op (on our parking lot)
Date: Tuesday, July 24
Time: Noon to 4 p.m.

Carter BloodCare is in great need of blood. Summertime is a very busy time with few donors. Please come out and do your part to save a life today. You get points for free gifts or gift cards, plus cookies and juice. Make sure you eat a good breakfast that morning.

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

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



The offices of Lamar EC will be closed Wednesday, July 4, in observance of the holiday.

As always, crews will be on standby in the event of an emergency.



▲ Jerry Williams and a helper draw door prize winners' names.

LEC members Dalin, Sandra and Hannah Murdock ▶



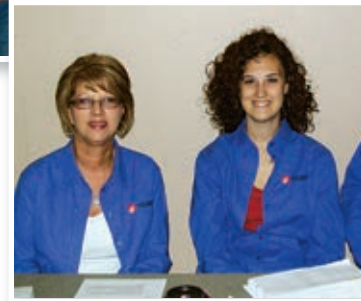
Co-op members Tommie and Jimmy Fodge ▶



▲ Board members Lyle Yoder, Matthew Albus and George Wood



▲ Gus Harris Jr. from Sumner was our grand prize winner of a 32-inch LCD TV.



Annual Meeting Highlights

The Lamar Electric Co-op Annual Membership Meeting was held on Saturday, April 28, at Love Civic Center in Paris.

Three directors were re-elected. In District 5, Allen Branch was uncontested with 235 votes. In District 6, George Wood was uncontested with 228 votes. In District 7, Ron Tippit was also uncontested with 96 votes.

General Manager Jerry Williams updated members on the financial reports and ongoing projects. He reviewed several current and future projects being done to help improve service reliability and make sure power is available when needed.

The names of six high school seniors were drawn out of a hopper, and each won a \$1,000 scholarship. There were 68 entries. The scholarship can be used at any accredited university, college or junior college of their choice.

Money for these scholarships comes from unclaimed deposits and refunds from our members. Each member can still file a claim with the State of Texas for unclaimed checks, but the law allows Lamar Electric to use a portion

of these funds for scholarships.

The winners were Chanda Foster of Honey Grove High School, Clayton Hanley of North Lamar High School, Macee Mabry of Prairiland High School, Steven Melvin of Prairiland High School, Heath Shirley of North Lamar High School and Caitlin Wheeler of Roxton High School.

Chanda is the daughter of Bruce and Sydney Foster of the Tigertown Community. Clayton is the son of James and Kim Hanley of the Hopewell Community. Macee is the daughter of Mark and Judy Mabry of the Milton Community. Steven is the son of Danny and Nita Melvin of the Taylor Town Community. Heath is the son of Ron and Trina Shirley of the Hopewell Community. Caitlin is the daughter of John and Janet Wheeler of the Harmon Community.

The names of all members present at the meeting were placed in the hopper for prize drawings. Prizes were given to 38 members. The grand prizewinner of a 32-inch LCD HDTV was Gus V. Harris Jr. of Sumner.

2012 Scholarship Winners

Marci Thompson and a young assistant draw scholarship winners' names. ▼



◀ Gretta Ashford, Rachael Whipkey and George Scroggins work at one of the registration tables.



CHANDA FOSTER
Honey Grove High School



CLAYTON HANLEY
North Lamar High School



MACEE MABRY
Prairiland High School



STEVEN MELVIN
Prairiland High School



HEATH SHIRLEY
North Lamar High School



CAITLIN WHEELER
Roxton High School

More Lucky Prizewinners

Microwave—Janet Ringwald, Paris

Western Photo Frame—James C. Wade, Blossom

Western Candle Holders—Tony D. Ballard,
Pattonville

Western Welcome Sign—Bill R. Anderson, Detroit

GE Convection Rotisserie—Paul M. Bayer

Cookware—Timothy E. Crawford, Bagwell

Weather Station—Harold Brown, Blossom

Fan—Bobbie F. Thompson, Clarksville

18-Inch Hedge Trimmer—John Savell, Blossom

Shop Vac—J.D. Rook, Powderly

Electric Skillet—Wendell Kinslow, Paris

Food Processor—Dorothy Fletcher, Bagwell

Black & Decker 12-Volt Drill—Jimmy Fodge, Paris

Jigsaw—Tigertown Community Center, Sumner

Dremel Rotary Tool—Q.B. Spencer, Sumner

Skil 6.5-Amp Drill—Katherine J. Sugg, Pattonville

iPhone Dock/Clock—H.R. Stephens, Sumner

5-Inch Sander—Anna Geer, Pattonville

Skilsaw—D.D. Leonard, Blossom

Digital Picture Frame—J.P. Duke, Roxton

Shredder—Donald J. Pittman, Blossom

Dirt Devil Vacuum—Lifeline Worship Center, Paris

Hand Vacuum—Debbie Dean, Sumner

Leaf Blower—James R. Gullion, Paris

Printer—Charles M. Kennedy, Pattonville

Toaster Oven—Harold T. Smith, Paris

Slow Cooker—Betty Thompson, Cooper

DVD Player—Kerry Murdock, Pattonville

Floor Lamp—Carla G. Manners, Cooper

Coffeemaker—Bobby R. Tingle, Sumner

Cordless Phone—W.H. Brumley, Sumner

Surge Protector—Isaac F. Jewett, Paris

Hand Blender—Joe Goforth, Sumner

Rice Cooker—Joseph Gillean, Cooper

13-Inch Trimmer—Neal Conder, Powderly

Can Opener—Gus V. Harris Jr., Sumner

Weather Radio—George R. Bueker, Paris