

Youth Tour: Shaping Our Youth for 50 Years



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

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.

Last summer, Miranda McNabb and Trey Scudder represented Lamar Electric Cooperative on their "trip of a lifetime." The picture to the right doesn't quite show the perfect view they had of the U.S. Capitol, through the window directly behind Congressman Hall. "Seniority has a few privileges, like a great view," Hall said.

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 co-op grassroots issues.

"It was an honor and a blessing to be chosen as the 2014 Texas representative," says Michaela Gardner, last year's Texas representative from Lovelady. "The YLC has not only given me a better understanding of our government and history, but also it has inspired me and broadened my horizons."

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.

"I've had parents come up to me after the program and say, 'I don't know what you did, but you brought back a different kid than you took.' To hear that from parents is gratifying and humbling," says Tracy Begley, a 2013 Youth Tour chaperone from Grayson-Collin EC.

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 young-

sters 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.

"My future plans involve a career in the military, so visiting all the war memorials and Arlington Cemetery was very special for me," said Scudder. "The entire trip from beginning to



Youth Tour participants pose with U.S. Rep. Ralph Hall.

end was awesome, and I will never forget it the rest of my life.”

McNabb explained how the trip brought her history lessons to life. “I enjoyed having the opportunity to see all the different historical places and artifacts, [which] helped me connect a lot of information I had learned during school,” she said. “It was an awesome experience.”

We’re excited to see what our future leaders accomplish. To know that Lamar EC played a small part in their development is truly something special.

How Can I Go?

Each year, we publish articles about this trip and are usually disappointed when only a handful of young people submits a short essay for the contest that could win them a place on the Youth Tour. We know there are a lot of activities for sophomores, juniors and seniors, but if you can help spread the word, perhaps we can get more folks to enter. The process is really simple; write a short essay on this topic: “Why Is Electricity Important to Me?” and give us your name and address. A few more details can be found in this magazine or on lamarelectric.coop.

Power Tip

They’re out of sight, but don’t forget about your air ducts. Taking care of them can save money and energy.

Check ducts for air leaks. Take care of minor sealing jobs with heat-approved tape, especially in attics and in vented crawl spaces. Call the pros for major ductwork repairs.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Lamar EC will be closed Thursday, January 1, to allow employees to ring in the new year with their families.

We wish you and yours a healthy, prosperous and happy new year!



1485 N. Main St. • P.O. Box 580
Paris, TX 75461

GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

Jerry D. Williams

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Allen Branch, President, *Sumner*

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Member Benefits

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

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.

CONTACT US

CALL US

(903) 784-4303 local or
1-800-782-9010 toll-free

FIND US ON THE WEB

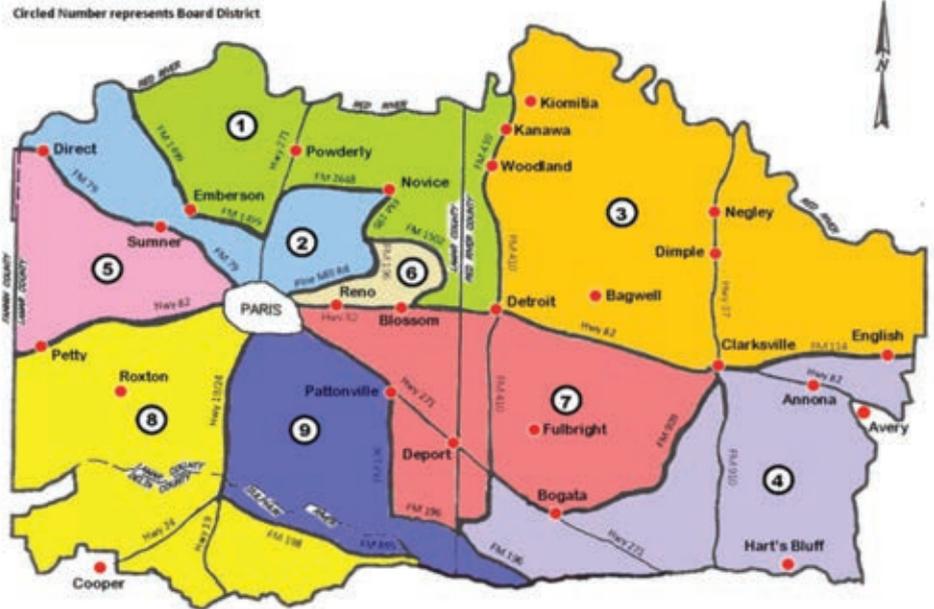
www.lamarelectric.coop



Co-op Annual Meeting Set for April 18

LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE will hold its annual meeting at 10 a.m., Saturday, April 18, at Love Civic Center, 2025 S. Collegiate Drive in Paris. There will be additional information in Texas Co-op Power regarding the meeting over the next few months.

Three positions on the board of directors are up for election each year. This year, Districts 5, 6 and 7 will be voting at the annual meeting. Members residing in Districts 5, 6 and 7 who wish to be a candidate for one of the three available board positions must appear in person at the main office of the cooperative and fill out a nomination form no earlier than January 18 and no later than February 17, as outlined in the co-op's bylaws. If you are unsure of which district you live in, please refer to the district map.



EXCERPT FROM LAMAR EC BYLAWS

Article III

SECTION 3. QUALIFICATIONS.

No person shall be eligible to become a board member of the cooperative who:

- a) Has not been a member of the Cooperative for at least one year prior to nomination;
- b) Has not been a bona fide resident of the board district for which seeking election for at least one year prior to nomination;
- c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
- d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years;
- e) Is a close relative of an employee or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, parent, child, brother, sister,

step-parent, step-child, step-brother, step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter -in-law, brother-in-law, and/or sister-in-law);

- f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or pleaded "no contest" to a felony; or
- g) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

No person shall be eligible to remain a board member who:

- a) Is not a member of the Cooperative;
- b) Is not a bona fide resident of the district for which elected;
- c) Is any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative;
- d) Is an employee of this cooperative or has been terminated from the cooperative less than five years;
- e) Is a close relative of an employee

or an employee's spouse ("close" being defined as wife, husband, grandparent, grandchild, parent, child, brother, sister, step-parent, step-child, step-brother, step-sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, brother-in-law, and/or sister-in-law);

- f) Has been convicted, pleaded guilty or pleaded "no contest" to a felony; or
- g) Is an incumbent of, or candidate for, an elective public office for which a salary is paid.

Upon establishment of the fact that a board member is holding office in violation of any of the foregoing provisions, the board shall remove such board member.

Nothing contained in this section shall affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the board or at any special or annual meeting of the members.



Charles and his beautiful family, from left: Greg Dooley, Tami Neff, Charles Dooley, Jody Dooley and Charlotte Dooley

Co-op Loses Board Member

LAMAR EC HAS LOST A VERY SPECIAL PERSON. On October 27, 2014, Charles Dooley died of injuries he received in an automobile accident. Dooley served on the board of directors at Lamar EC since 2007 and served as the vice president for the past five years. Not only was Dooley a kind gentleman, he was a great leader in the co-op. He was someone we all respected and enjoyed, especially when we were playing golf with him at sponsored events.

At the co-op, we have seen it happen time and time again where a tree would be blown over because of a storm and high winds. When we think of a falling tree, we always think of them falling onto the power lines and causing many outages. We never thought a tree would actually be the cause of death for one of our co-op family members.

The storm that blew through Lamar and Red River counties in early October brought with it heavy rains and high winds. Dooley had come to the office for a board committee meeting that day, and the storm hit about the same time the meeting was over. Dooley and his wife, Jody, decided to return home to avoid the storm.

As they were driving home, Dooley had to stop several times because of heavy rain or to move a limb out of the road so he could continue his drive. In a split second, there was a loud boom, and the car came to a halt. A huge tree fell on top of their car.

Four volunteer fire departments came to their aid but were hampered by the very large pine tree lying on top of the car. With the roof and windshield smashed in, the Dooleys were pinned inside. The emergency teams had to cut the roof off the car before they could remove the couple. Dooley had several injuries, including a broken sternum. Jody walked away with cuts and bruises.

Dooley was an avid outdoorsman. He played most of the golf courses in Northeast Texas and was a scratch golfer. Other times, he could be found in the woods, going after a deer or a wild hog. Even though we have lost a special person, it's not goodbye. It's see you later, Charles. You will be greatly missed by many.

Government-in-Action Youth Tour

EACH YEAR, LAMAR EC SELECTS two high school students to attend an all-expenses-paid tour of Washington, D.C., which includes visiting the U.S. Capitol and meeting members of Congress.

Eligible students must be in 10th, 11th or 12th grade and live full time in a residence served by Lamar EC or attend one of the four high schools served by the co-op: Prairieland, Roxton, Detroit and Faith Christian. Home-schooled students served by Lamar EC are also eligible. Applications must be complete and a three-page typed essay about "Why Is Electricity Important to Me?" and submit it to Lamar EC no later than 5 p.m. on February 13. It's that easy!

Learn more about the Government-in-Action Youth Tour at www.lamarelectric.coop. Look for Government-in-Action Youth Tour 2015 after clicking on the Youth Programs tab.



Delta County Receives Tornado Sirens

SOME PEOPLE IN URBAN AREAS MAY question the need for tornado sirens when you can get instant weather alerts on your phone, but here in rural Northeast Texas, we still rely on tornado sirens to warn the public.

Until recently, Delta County had one tornado siren located north of Cooper to help warn 5,100 people.

“When a bad storm rolls through our area, people mostly rely on the local news channel and the radio,” said Monty Hobbs, emergency management coordinator for Delta County. “I will travel throughout the county posting updates on Facebook, but as you know, not everyone uses social media.”

With help from the emergency management funds and county funds, Hobbs recently purchased four tornado sirens. The sirens were placed in Klondike, Enloe, Charleston and Cooper. “Placing the sirens in these locations would provide additional coverage in the rural areas, but each community had to agree to the additional expenses to install the sirens,” Hobbs said.

The sirens can be heard from 360 degrees. They are about 6 feet tall and 4 feet wide and weigh about 1,000 pounds.

The Enloe community has never had a tornado siren, but residents thought there was a need for one. When the siren arrived at the volunteer fire department, the firefighters knew they were going to need some assistance because of the size and the installation requirements.

“After reviewing the instructions, we had some questions about the correct size of pole. So, I contacted Jerry Williams at Lamar Electric,” said Rocky Young, a volunteer fireman in Enloe. “Jerry not only answered our questions but donated the pole, and, realizing we were going to need further help, he also volunteered a crew to help install the tornado siren. Thanks to



Lamar Electric helps install the tornado siren at Enloe.



From left: Drew Conder, Ryan Dean, Rocky Young, Danny Michael, Robert Douglas, Chevis Springer and Larry King

Lamar Electric and all their help, the community of Enloe is better prepared for the tornado season.”

Lamar EC Communications Director Dena Beason said, “Commitment to the community and safety are a part of who we are as a cooperative.”

Academic Scholarships Available

THIS YEAR, LAMAR ELECTRIC will award six \$1,000 academic scholarships to students who plan to pursue an academic degree or certification from an accredited university, college, junior college, technical school or other postsecondary educational institution. Scholarship payment will be made directly to the college, university or school in one lump sum. Scholarships must be used within two years of the award date. Funds may be used for tuition, books, and room and board.

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for a Lamar EC scholarship, the student must:

- ▶ Live full time in a residence served by Lamar County Electric; and
- ▶ Be a graduating senior attending a high school or an accredited home extended studies program within the counties served by Lamar Electric.

Six scholarships will be given away at the Lamar Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting, April 18, in a random drawing of qualified students. The winners need not be present.

The entry deadline is April 10, 2015. The application can be found on the Lamar Electric website, www.lamarelectric.coop. Once the application is completed online, simply click on the "Email" button and send to scholarship@lamarelectric.coop.

Or fill out the application below and mail to: Lamar Electric Cooperative, Attn: Dena Beason, P.O. Box 580, Paris, TX 75461



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LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2015 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

DEADLINE: APRIL 10, 2015

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

NAME OF HIGH SCHOOL: _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME: _____

LAMAR ELECTRIC ACCOUNT #: _____

PHONE #: _____