

# What's in It for "We?"



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO JERRY D. WILLIAMS

**ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE FEATURES** of cooperatives is that instead of answering the popular question, "What's in it for me?" we answer a different question: "What's in it for we?"

Cooperatives are often formed when the market fails to offer a product or service with decent quality at an affordable price. Lamar Electric Cooperative was formed in 1938, after investor-owned utilities decided there was not enough profit to be made in the rural areas of Lamar, Red River and Delta counties and refused to offer electricity to our community. Across the rural areas of the United States the same comments were made; "If they want electricity, they should move to town."

In response, the founding members of Lamar Electric Cooperative went door to door to collect \$5 from each household to raise a portion of the original investment the co-op needed. Those early go-getters realized the only way to get electricity for me was to get it for we, the whole community. Some of the early founders of Lamar Electric even helped dig the holes and set the poles that carried electric wires alongside the road leading to their community.

Cooperative ownership lies in the hands of the people who use the co-op's products and services, not outside investors. There is a certain amount of pride knowing that we can take care of ourselves and do not have to rely on the big cities for all our needs. The definition of a big city has changed over the years, but the concept of cities placing their citizens first has not changed. Not only did co-ops start by answering the "What's in it for we?" question, but they also continue to answer that question for as long as they exist.

These days, we often hear about companies that abandon their local communities and move overseas in search of cheaper labor. This negatively affects the community through job losses, declines in housing values and school closures. Because local residents own rural electric cooperatives, the cooperative will never leave their community. It would be practically impossible for Lamar Electric to leave our community. The co-op is a critical part of what makes this community a community.

Lamar Electric is often called upon to replace light bulbs at ball parks, rehang a flag at a cemetery or even help a community to install tornado warning sirens. We do this because we don't just provide electricity to the rural communities; we are a part of the community. Our employees live here; they are your neighbor that helps at church, helps with the Scouts, coach teams and are actively involved alongside each of you.

The way Cooperatives continue to answer the question, "What's in it for we?" is essential to our survival. It is imperative that we keep you, our members, as the primary focus. Keeping rates as low as possible is one major part of that focus, but ensuring that we provide real value as your trusted energy advisor is also extremely important. Most of all, our goal is to help improve the way of life in the communities where we serve. Your help and support allows us to remain focused and be able to serve the me and the we in our community long into the future.



Stay indoors when lightning strikes.

## Stay Safe Around Lightning

**WHEN SUMMER STORMS** shoot lightning down from the sky, there are several things you can do to keep your family safe. Here is some advice from the National Weather Service:

- ▶ **Stay aware of weather conditions.** A simple forecast can tell you whether you need to delay outdoor activities, put away sports equipment or tools, or simply head inside to avoid danger.
- ▶ **Don't touch a plugged-in computer** or TV indoors when there's a lightning storm outdoors. Stay safe by using remote controls to operate them.
- ▶ **To preserve expensive pieces** of electronic equipment, unplug them before the storm hits. Once lightning starts, it's not safe to touch those plugs or cords.
- ▶ **Stay off of corded phones.** Lightning can travel through a home's wiring. It's OK to make calls on a cell or cordless phone during a lightning storm.
- ▶ **Keep a distance** from anything that can conduct electricity, like power lines, barbed-wire fences and, of course, metal ladders. Avoid showering or bathing during storms, too, as metal plumbing—and the water inside it—can conduct electricity.
- ▶ **Don't go outdoors** during a lightning storm, and stay away from windows and doors. Even a small leak or conduction point can let lightning into your home.

# Lamar Electric Recognized for Safety

**LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HAS REACHED A MILESTONE** of seven years without a recordable injury. Texas Electric Cooperatives Loss Control Specialist Scott Corley presented the cooperative an award for seven years with no lost-time incidents—a span that equals 2,555 days.

“A lineman’s job is one of the top 10 most dangerous jobs in the United States. An entire organization like this one having no lost-time incidents for seven years is an exceptional safety record,” Corley said. The award was accepted by Lamar Electric Line Superintendent Scott Sansom and CEO/General Manager Jerry Williams. This record of no lost time is due to the commitment to safety from our board of directors, CEO/general manager, managers, superintendents and employees.

“We have weekly safety meetings, and we review our safety manual continuously. We even go above and beyond the guidelines in our safety manual to ensure that all employees get home safely to their families,” Sansom said.

Lamar Electric employee Rick Crump also received an award, for operating without a lost-time work injury for 30 years. Crump has been a Lamar Electric employee for 31 years this year.

We are truly a cooperative family, looking out for each other at work and off the job to ensure that all employees arrive safely back home to their families each and every day. We strive to provide members with safe, affordable and reliable electrical service. “Safety is more than a choice we make as employees; it is a way of life,” said CEO/General Manager Jerry Williams.



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Paris, TX 75461

## GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO

Jerry D. Williams

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ron E. Tippit, President, *Clarksville*

Lyle Yoder, Vice President,  
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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

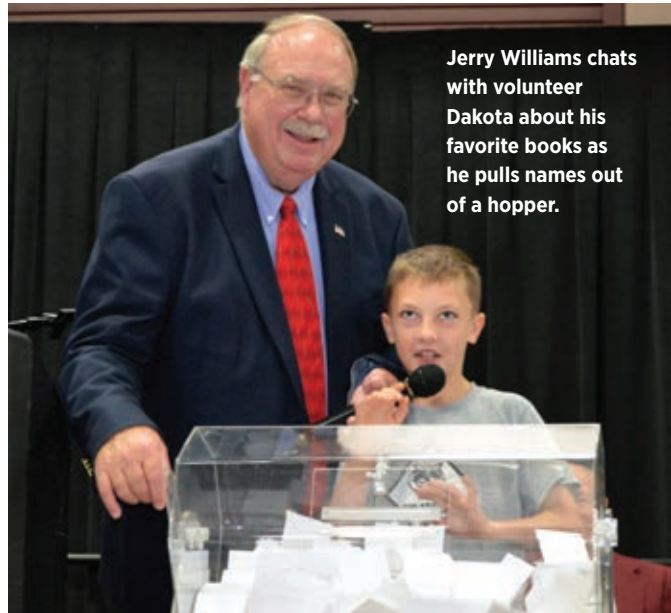
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**(903) 784-4303** local or  
**1-800-782-9010** toll-free

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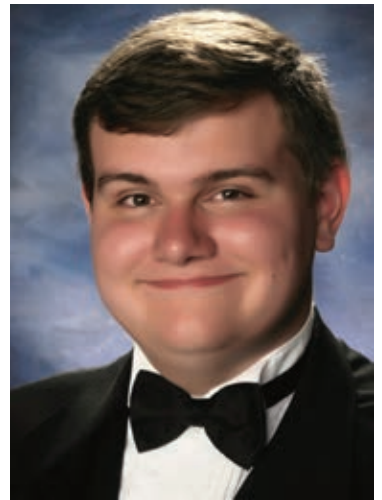




Ethan Peters



Karlee Alexander



Adrian Hobbs

# Lamar Electric Annual Meeting Highlights

**THE LAMAR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE** Annual Membership Meeting was held Saturday, April 16, at Love Civic Center in Paris. Lamar Electric had three directors up for election, and all ran unopposed. In District 2, Jeremy Hamil received 136 votes. In District 3, Harry Moore received 124 votes. In District 4, James Floyd received 117 votes. These directors were declared elected, and each will each serve another three-year term.

CEO/General Manager Jerry Williams updated the members on the co-op's financial reports and ongoing projects, and

answered questions from the audience.

The names of five high school seniors were drawn out of the hopper to each receive a \$1,000 scholarship. There were 74 entries. The \$1,000 scholarships can be used at any university, college, junior college, technical school or other postsecondary educational institution of the students' choice. Money for these scholarships comes from unclaimed deposits and unclaimed capital credits retirements from our members. Each member can still file a claim with the state of Texas to





Prizewinners were very excited about the prizes they won.



Savana Sparks



Tana Grabanski

recover unclaimed checks, but the law allows Lamar Electric to use a portion of these funds for scholarships.

Scholarship winners were **Ethan Peters** of Chisum High School, son of Kenneth and Mary Peters of Brookston; **Karlee Alexander** of North Lamar High School, daughter of Kim Figley of Reno; **Adrian Hobbs** of North Lamar High School, son of Gene and Tonia Hobbs of Reno; **Savana Sparks** of Prairiland High School, daughter of Wade and Karen Sparks of Blossom; and **Tana Grabanski** of Prairiland High School, daughter of Mari Grabanski of Reno.

The names of all members present at the meeting were placed in the hopper for prize drawings. Prizes were won by 29 members. The grand prizewinner of a 43-inch, high-definition television was James Wade of Reno. The grand prizewinner of a Yeti cooler was Willie Pace of Clarksville.

**WINNER**

**PRIZE**

<b>Willie Pace</b> .....	Yeti cooler
<b>James Wade</b> .....	43-inch HDTV
<b>Terry McFadden</b> .....	Yeti cup
<b>Michael Hill</b> .....	Woman's necklace
<b>Dorothy Fletcher</b> .....	Men's wallet
<b>Willie Pace</b> .....	Olive tree
<b>James Wade</b> .....	Blueberry bush
<b>Janice Nations</b> .....	Clematis flowers
<b>Gerry Leonard</b> .....	Red Ruffle azaleas
<b>Jennifer Berquist</b> .....	Food processor
<b>Barbara Jewett</b> .....	Shop-Vac
<b>Rodger Wettschreck</b> .....	Hand vacuum cleaner
<b>Lynn Lowrey</b> .....	Vacuum cleaner
<b>Mike Mayfield</b> .....	Tower fan
<b>Tigertown Community Center</b> ..	Slow cooker
<b>Betty Rowe</b> .....	Toaster
<b>Harold Smith</b> .....	Toaster oven
<b>Curry Jones</b> .....	Blender
<b>Bobbie Thompson</b> .....	Griddle
<b>Lawrence Brown</b> .....	George Foreman grill
<b>Jerry Brazeal</b> .....	Skilsaw
<b>June Davis</b> .....	Jigsaw
<b>Eugene Adams</b> .....	LED lights
<b>Stephanie O'Connell</b> .....	Hedge trimmer
<b>Bruce Martin</b> .....	Surge protector
<b>Phyllis Brumley</b> .....	Lamp set
<b>Debbie Dean</b> .....	Fabric steamer
<b>Rebecca Stephens</b> .....	Iron
<b>Lionel Getz</b> .....	Coffeemaker
<b>Jack Ervin</b> .....	Shredder
<b>Holly Blackmon</b> .....	Drill