

## CECA Membership To Receive \$350,000 Return on Investment



**MESSAGE  
FROM  
MANAGER  
ALAN  
LESLEY**

**E**ver wonder who owns your electric company? If you get electricity from CECA, the answer's easy—look in the mirror.

You and other folks who receive electricity from us are the owners. Of course, being an owner doesn't mean you can drive to a substation and take home a transformer or borrow a spool of wire. Those assets are owned collectively by everyone who has signed up for electric service. A portion of the electric bill you pay each month, in fact, goes into building distribution infrastructure—poles, wires and substations—that bring you a steady supply of power.

Cooperatives follow a unique consumer-focused business model led by a set of seven principles. The third cooperative principle, "Members' Economic Participation," requires all of us to chip in a bit on our monthly bill to keep the cooperative in good shape.

But it also adds another advantage: You get money back. We're not-for-profit, so any funds left over after bills have been paid, infrastructure built, operations, maintenance, debt service and taxes are covered, go into a capital credits account for each co-op member. Then, when your board of directors determines the co-op is in good financial shape, this capital is returned to you by check. How much money you get back depends on how much electricity you used.

Capital credit refunds are to you what dividends are to stockholders at for-profit companies. Only we don't aim to make a profit. Our goal is to provide you with electricity at a price that is as close to cost as possible. That way, more of your money stays in your pocket—up front.

In short, you are receiving a vital resource, electricity, from a business owned and operated by you, your friends and neighbors. Working together, we provide you with the highest level of service we can while striving to keep your electric bills affordable.

Capital credits are allocated to each individual member based on how much the member paid the cooperative during a specified period of time. Since the cooperative was established

in 1938, more than \$4 million has been returned to our member/owners in the form of capital credits. In fact, your cooperative has returned all of the allocated margins owed to our members who received service from the cooperative through the year 1981.

During the April board meeting, your directors voted to refund \$350,000 in capital credits on a first-in, first-out basis. These funds will be disbursed in July.

Being a member of a cooperative is a privilege, and getting a capital credit refund is a bonus associated with that privilege. But that's not all. Your cooperative also affects the economic welfare of the communities we serve by conducting business locally. Investments we make in infrastructure don't profit someone in an area far away—benefits stay right here in our community in the products and services we purchase, as well as through the taxes we pay. And because our employees are your neighbors, you can be assured that they will give you the same quality of service that they would want at their own homes.

Membership at CECA not only ensures electricity at a competitive rate, but also ownership of the cooperative! And that's the cooperative difference.



### What Doesn't Belong on a Utility Pole

Although seemingly innocent enough, putting signs or other items on utility poles creates serious safety hazards. Staples, nails and tacks used to hang signs—as well as the signs themselves—pose dangers to CECA lineworkers who must climb poles when either restoring power after storms or performing routine maintenance to ensure system reliability.

Posters or other objects (co-ops have found birdhouses, balloons, flags and even basketball goals on poles) can create dangerous obstacles. Also, the nails and tacks left behind from signs can snag utility workers' boots or puncture safety clothing, making lineworkers vulnerable to slipping or even electrocution.

In addition to being hazardous, tampering with utility poles can be costly. Posting signs or attaching other objects to utility poles is against the law.



# Conservation MATTERS

THE LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT ENERGY CONSERVATION FROM YOUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

## Fallacies and Facts About Home-Energy Consumption

**FALLACY:** Using a bigger air conditioner will cool my house better.

**FACT:** A smaller air conditioner that runs for a slightly longer period is more efficient than a larger unit that cools the house with short bursts. Have an air-conditioning professional determine the best size for your home.

**FALLACY:** Using an old refrigerator or freezer as a spare is economical.

**FACT:** Old refrigerators and freezers are usually less efficient than newer models, and keeping the appliance going can cost extra money. Consider getting rid of an old fridge and using a cooler instead if you occasionally need additional cool storage.

**FALLACY:** Duct work should be sealed with duct tape.

**FACT:** Duct tape is not the best tool for the job. Poor surface preparation and dusty environments often cause the tape to fall off. The tape also is not as durable as the preferred sealants—mastic or metal tape.

**FALLACY:** Ceiling fans only save energy during warm weather.

**FACT:** Circulating air with ceiling fans saves money in all seasons—when on the right setting. In summer, change the rotation of the blades to direct air down, making the room feel up to 4 degrees cooler. In the winter, direct air upward.

**FALLACY:** Heat always rises.

**FACT:** Warm air rises, but heat can travel in many directions, depending on what forces are acting on it.

**FALLACY:** Setting the thermostat to a cooler temperature than ultimately needed will make the air conditioner cool faster.

**FACT:** An air conditioner runs at the same rate until it reaches the thermostat setting. If you set it to a low temperature, you might forget to put it back to normal and use more energy than necessary.

**FALLACY:** The way I use my kitchen stove does not affect energy use.

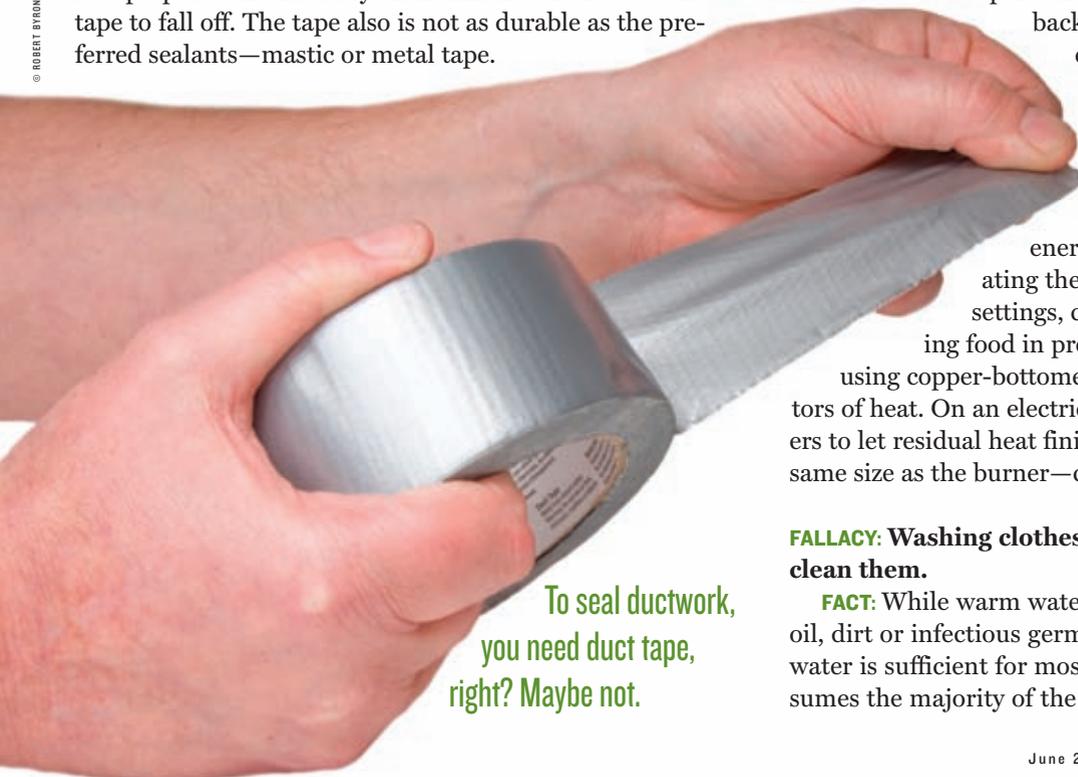
**FACT:** Cooks can reduce energy use by about half when operating the kitchen stove by using low-heat settings, covering pots and pans, preparing food in pressure cookers or microwaves or using copper-bottomed pans, which are good conductors of heat. On an electric stove, turning off electric burners to let residual heat finish cooking—and using pans the same size as the burner—can save energy.

**FALLACY:** Washing clothes in hot water is necessary to clean them.

**FACT:** While warm water might be necessary to remove oil, dirt or infectious germs, doing laundry with cold water is sufficient for most washes. Heating water consumes the majority of the energy used to do laundry.

To seal ductwork,  
you need duct tape,  
right? Maybe not.

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Club members help with a variety of community activities throughout the year. These students were setting up tents for vendors at the Brownwood Reunion Celebration.

# The Positive Place for Kids

BY SHIRLEY DUKES

*As with most things worthwhile, it started with a vision: a vision of a safe place where the boys and girls of Brown County could go after school. Ernie Painter was the driving force behind the club. It all came about one day in 1991 as the members of the Economic Development Corporation were sitting around at the courthouse awaiting a ruling on another venture they were implementing. The discussion came around to the youths of Brown County, and someone told Ernie he should get together a Boys and Girls club. Painter was a poor kid growing up, so the idea appealed to him. He chose to take the idea and run with it.*

Painter began by contacting Ronnie Ellis of the Brownwood Independent School District. Ronnie also recognized the need for the club, and plans began to be put in place to make the dream a reality. It took two years and a lot of hard work and dedication

from several people, and in 1994 the Boys and Girls Club of Brown County came into existence. Their first home was the old Lions Gym on Austin Avenue. At that time, they were serving up to 35 kids. In August 2006, the club moved to the abandoned South Elementary School on Avenue L. From summer 2008 to fall 2009, their membership grew to more than 200 kids. Rapid expansion of the membership caused expenses to skyrocket, and club directors and members feared the organization might be forced to close. But Brown County and the surrounding communities responded to the need and raised \$40,000.

Currently, the club's annual budget is set at \$220,000. It does receive some pass-through funding from the national Boys and Girls Club of America, and some money comes from grants and foundations. But about 75 percent of the funding comes from local supporters.

Michael Richardson, president of the Brown County club's board, says that "without the support of the community, the Boys and Girls Club would not be in existence." In fact, most everyone involved with the club will tell you that the community is the most instrumental element in the success of the organization.

"For a community this size to have a facility this nice with this much participation is a benefit to the community and a tribute to the people who support it," said Lewis Locker, one of the club's founding board members. Any board member will concur that community is key.

When it comes to fundraising, this community comes out in force. The biggest fundraiser for the club is a barn dance held each year on the first Saturday in May. This year marks the 10th Annual Texas Barn Dance benefiting the Boys and Girls Club of Brown County.

By the time this goes to print, the barn dance will be a thing of the past, but as of this writing, it appears that goal will be met. The dance, held at Sorrel Canyon Ranch and hosted by Bob and Janice Garrett, is one of Brown County's largest fundraisers. With this being the 10th anniversary of the dance, the board set a goal of raising \$100,000.

Gary P. Nunn and the Bunkhouse Band were the entertainment for this year's dance. The funding for the band was underwritten by a friend of the Boys and Girls Club, which means that all of the band's expenses were paid in full, and



Winners in each age group, both boys and girls divisions, of the Punt Pass and Kick competition

the club will benefit 100 percent from the proceeds of that part of the fundraiser. A silent auction was held while attendees enjoyed a delicious meal of chateaubriand and all the fixings, catered by Prima Pasta. The meal was followed by a live auction,

which included such items as an exceptional collection of vintage fine wines, Texas Trophy hunts, a registered puppy, unique home furnishings, vacation packages, sports memorabilia, beautiful jewelry and much more.

Tickets were limited and in high demand, so you would be wise to mark your calendar for May 5, 2012, and get the jump on getting your tickets for next year's event.

Rex Tackett, local auctioneer and staunch supporter of the club, has been the auctioneer at the fundraiser for the past nine years. Tackett began auctioneering after hearing how much was charged for auctioneering services. He said "I can do that!" and promptly attended auctioneer school and began the not-so-lucrative career of volunteering his service to charity events such as this.

"If it's going to benefit a child, we're in," said Rex's wife Mariann. "Rex is such a softie when it comes to kids. Anything to do with kids, he just loves. The barn dance is his favorite." Indeed, the Boys and Girls Club is a pet project of both Rex and Mariann, who donate many hours to the club.

The Tacketts are by far not the only ones who donate their time and efforts to the club. The club has a working board of 14 people who are entirely devoted to the cause. By no means is this board one in name only. To be on the board, an individual must be willing to not only sit in on meetings and make important decisions, but must also be willing to work side by side in the heat and cold, working fundraisers and helping with the general upkeep and maintenance of the club and the building.

"My kids first became involved in the Boys & Girls Club when we lived in Burnet," said Richardson, board president. "I saw what a great place it was firsthand and all the activities provided to them. When the opportunity was presented to me here in Brownwood, I knew it was the place to be involved! It helps so many kids and provides them with a safe place to nurture their character and leadership skills. I have a passion for helping youth and feel it is important to give back to your community."

Brownwood ISD has been a huge partner with the club. In 2010, BISD gave the South Elementary campus to the club, allowing it the stability needed to apply for further funding. BISD buses kids from their campuses during the school year and helps with the USDA's Summer Feeding Program.



**LEFT:** Outstanding members of the club are rewarded with the Youth of the Month honor. To receive this award, the child must display a positive attitude and be considered by employees and other members to be an all-around good child. **ABOVE:** Two teen members of Smart Girls and Smart Leaders make mums for their little sisters in the Smart Girls Program. The little sisters wore the mums to the Brownwood Lions Homecoming game.

“We really appreciate what they (the Boys and Girls Club) do for the families, and we do all we can to help support them,” said BISD Superintendent Dr. Reece Blincoe.

Howard Payne University is another strong supporter of the club with its Work Study Students Program. Each semester, the club hires up to 12 students to supplement the workforce. Through this program, Howard Payne pays 75 percent of the students’ hourly wage, giving the club the advantage of hiring four students for the price of one.

This is a huge benefit that the club deeply appreciates. HPU students often volunteer at the club or have fraternity or sorority community service projects to help the club throughout the year. And, Danny Willingham, club director, said, “We often take groups of members to the university for guided tours. We hope that it will encourage our kids to pursue a post-high school education.”

Maintenance on the building is an ongoing process, and the club is fortunate that businesses and individuals are willing to donate their time to its upkeep. Some of those are: Roberts and Petty, Digger Diamond Electric, Cabler Construction, Elliott Electric, H&H Janitorial, Waldrop Construction and Schultz Steamway.

The club is open 49 weeks out of the year, Monday through Friday, and serves about 150 kids per day. Hours during the school year are 2:30-6:30 p.m. Summer hours are currently 7 a.m.-6 p.m., but those could change.

The fee for membership is \$20 per month for the first child and \$10 per month for each additional child, with a maximum of \$50 per family. Scholarships are available.

The club has one full-time employee, Danny Willingham, and 12 or more part-time employees at various times of the year.

In addition to being a safe place for the kids, the club provides learning opportunities. Programs such as Power Hour provide homework help and tutoring with three paid tutors. Smart Girls, Smart Leaders and Passport to Manhood are all national programs provided by the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. The Brown County club has an art teacher who promotes self-expression and helps members develop their talents. There is a Technology Center with 25 computers for use. Twenty of these computers were donated by Howard Payne University. The club uses Bascom’s Global Chalkboard, an Internet-safety program, to protect the members from inappropriate sites and online predators. The kids have access to 25,000 pre-approved sites that have been picked out by schoolteachers. All other sites are blocked. The Boys & Girls Clubs of America also provides Club Tech, which is a comprehensive approach to technology that includes: Skill Tech, Digital Arts, Net Smartz, MyClubMyLife.com and free software from Microsoft to keep the operating systems and software up to date. Each year, the club participates in Junior Olympics, recognizing the physical needs of their members and helping fight sedentary lifestyles, one of the country’s growing concerns. Play is an important part of our children’s lives, and the Boys and Girls Club of Brown County tries not to forget it.

The Boys and Girls Club of Brown County is located at 1701 Avenue L in Brownwood. If you are interested in donating, volunteering, or have a student you would like to enroll in the club, you can drop by in person or send a letter to P.O. Box 488, Brownwood 76804. The club’s phone number is (325) 641-2582 and e-mail address is [bgbrown@verizon.net](mailto:bgbrown@verizon.net). To learn more, donate or make a payment, visit [www.bgbrownwood.org](http://www.bgbrownwood.org).

# RECIPES

*Wow! Nothing says summer like some good ol' hot-pepper dips!  
Here are some recipes that are guaranteed to warm the taste buds.*



## Garbage Dip

1/4 cup oil	1 bunch green onion, chopped
1/4 cup vinegar	1/2 purple onion, chopped
1 tablespoon fajita seasoning	1 jalapeño pepper, minced fine
6 tomatoes, chopped	1 bell pepper, chopped
2 cans black olives, drained and minced	2 cans (4 ounces) chopped green chilis, drained

Mix oil, vinegar and fajita seasoning in bowl. Set aside. Add prepared veggies and mix well. Refrigerate 2 hours or overnight. Serve with chips. Serves 8.

**DEBBIE GREEN, *Rising Star***



## Texas Caviar

6 cans (14.5 ounces) black-eyed peas with jalapeños	1 small can jalapeño peppers, chopped
2 1/2 cups red onions, chopped	1 clove garlic, finely chopped
2 cups bell peppers, chopped	1 1/2 teaspoons Louisiana hot sauce, or to taste
4 ounces pimientos, chopped	1 large bottle red wine vinegar
2 large cans black olives, sliced	salad dressing

Mix together all ingredients in large bowl. Add salad dressing. Cover and keep refrigerated until ready to serve. Serve with chips. Serves 15.

**BERNICE AND SANDRA MITCHELL, *Romney***



## Prairie Fire Dip

*This recipe was featured in Texas Co-op Power magazine.*

1/4 cup butter	1/2 teaspoon black pepper
1 medium onion	1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 can (4 ounces) jalapeño peppers, diced	1 teaspoon garlic powder
1 can (4 ounces) green chilis, diced	2 cups Cheddar cheese, grated
	1 cup mozzarella, grated

Combine all ingredients in heavy saucepan. Heat on medium-low heat until cheese melts. Stir well and serve hot. Serves 10.

**DEBBIE GREEN, *Rising Star***

## WE WANT YOUR RECIPES!

**Do you have a favorite recipe you would be willing to share?**

Comanche Electric Cooperative would love to have your recipes for a members-only cookbook. You might just see them in a future issue of this magazine or on our website! Send your submissions to:

*CECA, Attn: Shirley Dukes,  
P.O. Box 729, Comanche, TX  
76442 or sdukes@ceca.coop.*



## What Makes a Dad

*God took the strength of a mountain,  
The majesty of a tree,  
The warmth of a summer sun,  
The calm of a quiet sea,  
The generous soul of nature,  
The comforting arm of night,  
The wisdom of the ages,  
The power of the eagle's flight,  
The joy of a morning in spring,  
The faith of a mustard seed,  
The patience of eternity,  
The depth of a family need,  
Then God combined these qualities,  
When there was nothing more to add,  
He knew His masterpiece was complete,  
And so, He called it ... Dad.*

Author Unknown

**Happy Father's Day**

Sunday, June 19

## ELECTRIC SAFETY VACATION CHECKLIST

We look forward to the fun and relaxation of summer vacations all year long. But while we're away, fires can start when lightning storms strike houses, sparking flames in electronics or small appliances, and burglaries tend to increase because folks aren't at home.

To protect your home while away, implement this safety checklist before you leave to help decrease the risk of problems:

- Turn off and unplug electric appliances, including toaster ovens, stoves and curling irons. It's especially important to unplug television sets and computers, as these items are more susceptible to lightning and power surges.

- Use a timer on indoor lights. Look for one that can be set to a random pattern rather than one that cycles the same pattern throughout the day.

- Install motion-detecting lights outdoors.

- Give your house key to a trusted neighbor, and make sure he or she has a phone number where you can be reached.

Unplugging electronics before you leave is one of the best things you can do to help protect your home.

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## SUMMER COMFORT

*Just as you can cut back on driving to save energy, you also can limit the amount of electricity you use at home by cutting waste. Here are nine ways you can reduce your energy consumption this summer without feeling uncomfortable:*

**1** **Replace your old, manual thermostat with an electronic model.** New thermostats have automatic settings that can slightly change indoor temperatures at strategic times. For example, you can program your thermostat to slightly raise the temperature after the family leaves the house in the morning, and then program it to lower again just before everyone gets home.

**2** **Schedule a tuneup for your air-conditioning system.** A licensed A/C technician will check the levels of refrigerant in the system and determine whether any of its parts are wearing out or running inefficiently. The better you maintain your system, the less it costs to operate it.

**3** **Close the blinds during the hours when direct sunlight hits your house.** The less sun that shines into your home, the cooler it will stay. That means your air conditioner won't need to kick on as often.

**4** **Run your dishwasher, washing machine and clothes dryer after dark.** Most people do all of that during the day, so demand for electricity soars. Doing chores at night, particularly ones that produce heat and cause the air conditioner to run more, helps lower the co-op's overall peak use, which helps control the cost you pay per kilowatt-hour.

**5** **Better yet, air-dry your laundry.** Hang clothes outside on a clothesline when the weather is nice.

**6** **Turn off lights and unplug computers, TVs and battery chargers.** Don't waste electricity by allowing your appliances to use power when you're not using them.

**7** **Replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact-fluorescent lightbulbs,** which use less energy, last longer and emit less heat.

**8** **Microwave your dinner.** A microwave oven uses less energy to cook the same food as the cooktop or oven.

**9** **Shop smart.** If you're replacing any of your home's appliances this summer, choose Energy Star-rated models. They're guaranteed to be more energy efficient than appliances that don't qualify for the label.