

# Voter Turnout a Tribute to Cooperative Values at TCEC



## MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER DARRYL SCHRIVER

### WE ASKED, AND YOU ANSWERED.

In late March, Tri-County Electric Cooperative began mailing letters and ballots to our members—more than 91,000 of you. We wanted your opinion on the sale of a subsidiary that was created in 1998 to offer cable, telephone, security and internet service in some parts of our area.

This company, while enjoying some success, has required an enormous amount of capital over the years as it worked to carve out a niche in an extremely competitive market.

For some time now, the board of directors has been looking for

a way to get out of that business and return to our primary focus: serving our members with affordable, reliable electricity. That means upgrading meters throughout the system, opening a new office in Aledo, and continuing with plans to upgrade or replace aging offices in Azle, Keller, Granbury, Seymour and Munday.

To do all that, we need to divest the subsidiary and invest our capital in this co-op. Your votes have given us your overwhelming blessing to move forward.

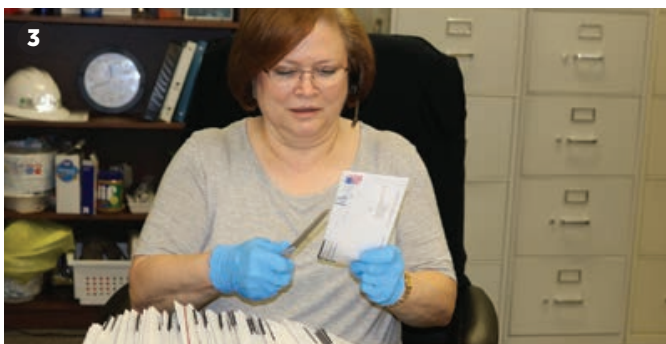
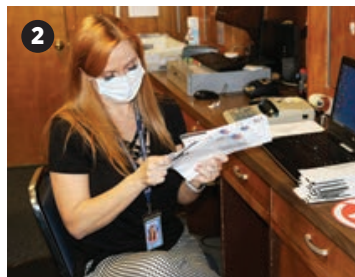
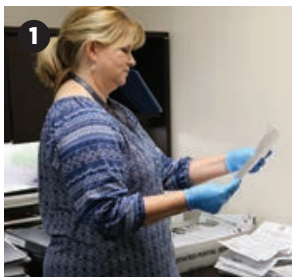
At this writing, with a few votes still coming in, more than 26,750 ballots have been tabulated. The yes votes—in favor of the board's initiative to sell the subsidiary—are at just over 91%. Many of our Azle office employees put on their masks and gloves and rolled up their sleeves to open envelopes, remove the ballots and tabulate the votes while keeping up with their regular duties. 22094002

Every member who voted, whether yea or nay, got a \$15 credit on their electric bill. The board and I viewed this as an opportunity to take our recognized budget savings for this year and pass some of it on to our members in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders.

It was also an opportunity to hear from you—and to be reminded of the cooperative principle of Democratic Member Control. I personally fielded more than 1,000 phone calls, returned every message and spent an average of four to five minutes on the phone with everyone who called, doing my best to answer your questions, listen to your concerns and get your input.

It's important for us to pause now and then to ask for your opinion. That's the value of our governance—a reminder that we're owned by our members. Your opinion counts, and we want to be as transparent as possible with you about the things we do.

Thanks for the reminder that Tri-County EC is your co-op.



**1. Donyea Walley, an administrative assistant in Tri-County EC's Azle office, removes ballots and sorts votes for the April member referendum.**

**2. Jessica Campbell, lead member services representative in Azle, opens envelopes as multiple staff members pitch in to get the members' votes counted.**

**3. Jane Hall, a work order technician, opens envelopes at her desk in Azle.**

**4. Annie McGinnis, a communications specialist, scans ballots.**



**LEFT:** This photo of Lewis Ansley was taken just two weeks before he died, in April 1949.

**ABOVE:** Ansley was promoted to line foreman at Tri-County Electric Cooperative in 1944. This photo, with his daughter, Rex, and son Roe, was taken in 1947.

## Proud Lineman, Proud Father

**LEWIS ANSLEY STARTED WORKING FOR TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC Cooperative** as a groundman in 1939. He steadily moved up the ranks, from second-class lineman to first-class lineman, and in 1944, he became a line foreman. The essential nature of his work, especially his role in keeping power flowing to the dairies on the co-op's lines, kept him from the draft and out of harm's way during World War II.

In March 1945, by a unanimous vote at a meeting, he and four other co-op employees were given \$20 bonuses for going above and beyond in their "day and night work" to repair damage after an ice storm. He also got a raise at that meeting, moving up from \$165 a month to \$175, though that decision was not unanimous.

On a sunny spring day in 1947, Ansley took his daughter, Rex, and son Roe a few steps up a utility pole for a photograph—to show them what their dad did when he went to work. Their faces tell the story of a proud, confident father and a couple of kids who are safe in his arms—but still a little nervous.

800735947

On April 18, 1949, Ansley was leading a crew replacing a pole about 7 miles west of Azle. As they worked that morning, the

pole fell against the line, which was energized with 7,200 volts of electricity. When he reached out to steady it, Ansley's hand contacted the copper plate connected to the ground wire. He remains the only Tri-County EC employee to ever lose his life in a work-related accident.

Ansley's widow, Gertie, was left with three young children. She never remarried. She was a highly respected teacher in Azle and raised her kids with help from her extended family. She passed away in 2004 at the age of 96.

The couple's sons, Roe and Monte, served in Vietnam, Monte as an Army paratrooper and Roe as a Marine. Their daughter, Rex, was awarded a \$300 college scholarship in 1964, in honor of her father, while a student at the University of North Texas. Later, she married a high school coach, and they raised their family in Graham and Gatesville and within the Northwest Independent School District. Now a widow herself, Rex is back home, on Tri-County EC's lines, where she has long served as president of the Azle Historical Society.

"We still have our father's hooks that he wore climbing the pole," she said. She also has the memories and a few photographs of that handsome young lineman—a proud father.



CHRISTINE KOHLER | ISTOCK.COM

# District Meeting FAQ

*Answers to common questions about district meetings and why you should attend*

**EACH SUMMER, TRI-COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE HOSTS DISTRICT meetings** in accordance with cooperative bylaws. We mail out official notices with meeting details and invite members to attend.

Inevitably, our employees field questions from members who ask essentially the same thing: What is a district meeting, and why do I need to attend?

This year, we would like to provide more information to better equip our members to participate in the district meeting process.

## What is a district meeting?

District meetings are a requirement of Tri-County EC's bylaws. During the meetings, member-owners nominate a fellow member from their area to be placed on the director election ballot for the co-op's annual meeting. Directors represent the member-owners of their district on the board and serve three-year terms.

## Why should I attend my district meeting?

Tri-County EC is member-owned and -governed. Attending the district meeting allows members to nominate a director to represent them on the governing board of the co-op. Members who attend will also receive an update on their cooperative and have the opportunity to interact with the employees who work for them. 800680749

## When are district meetings?

District meetings are held 30–90 days prior to the annual meeting, which is in October, so the time frame to hold district meetings is between July and September. Because directors are elected to three-year terms, each district meets every three years. The rotation for the next three years is as follows:

**2020:** Districts 1 and 4

**2021:** Districts 3, 6 and 8

**2022:** Districts 5, 9 and 10

## How will I be notified of my district meeting?

Members who reside within the districts whose directors' terms are expiring this year will receive a letter in the mail with meeting details, including the location, date, time and purpose of the meeting. Members should expect official notices through the postal service 10–30 days prior to the district meeting.

## How do I find out which district I'm in?

You will find your district listed on your electric bill, in the gray box at the top right-hand corner.

## Who is my director?

Once you know your district, you can find your director on our website at [tccetexas.com/board-directors](https://tccetexas.com/board-directors).

Specifications for district meetings are listed in the cooperative's bylaws under Article IV, Section 5.



# Meet Your Board Members Seeking Reelection

## 2020 DISTRICT MEETINGS



### DISTRICT 1 MEETING

**Wednesday, July 8 | 404 Main St., Azle**

Registration opens at 6 p.m. with the meeting to follow at 6:30 p.m. Member-owners who reside in District 1, as designated by the board of directors, will receive an invitation in the mail in early June to attend this meeting. The purpose of this district meeting is to nominate a director to the board to represent the member-owners of District 1. Director Todd Smith has indicated his intention to seek reelection to the Tri-County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors.



TODD SMITH

### TODD SMITH, DISTRICT 1

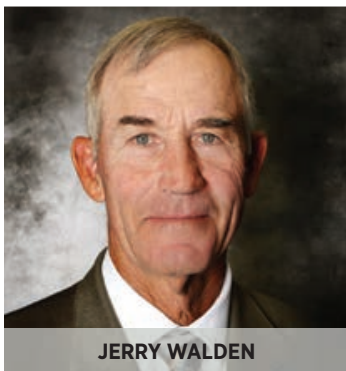
Smith represents the member-owners of District 1 and has served on the Tri-County EC Board of Directors since October 2002. He is currently board vice president. Smith has completed training requirements for his Credentialed Cooperative Director and Board Leadership certificates and completes yearly training to maintain his Director Gold credential, all through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. He is a graduate of Tarleton State University and is the interim superintendent for Azle Independent School District. He taught agriculture science at Azle High School for seven years and served as assistant principal for Azle High School, principal of Walnut Creek Elementary, and director of district operations and assistant superintendent. Smith is very active in his community and church. He is a member of the Azle FFA Alumni Association, Optimist Club of Azle and Texas Health Resources Foundation-Azle and served as a board member for the Azle Chamber of Commerce.



### DISTRICT 4 MEETING

**Thursday, July 9 | Garner Elementary School**

Registration opens at 6 p.m. with the meeting to follow at 6:30 p.m. Member-owners who reside in District 4, as designated by the board of directors, will receive an invitation in the mail in early June to attend this meeting. The purpose of this district meeting is to nominate a director to the board to represent the member-owners of District 4. Director Jerry Walden has indicated his intention to seek reelection to the Tri-County EC Board of Directors. 800807547



JERRY WALDEN

### JERRY WALDEN, DISTRICT 4

Walden represents the member-owners of District 4 and has served on the Tri-County EC Board of Directors since September 1999. He is a lifelong resident of Parker County and enjoys farming and ranching with his family in the Garner and Millsap communities. He has built custom homes for many years and shares ownership of Walden Farm and Ranch Supply with his family. He served on the Garner Independent School District board for 10 years, including as board president.

# Youth Tour Winners Receive Scholarships

FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS, OUR COMMUNITIES, ALONG WITH COUNTLESS OTHERS throughout the world, have faced unusual circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. To slow the spread of the disease, many milestone events had to be canceled, including graduations and weddings.

The 2020 Youth Tour was one of those events. For the first time since 1965, the multitude of high school students representing America's rural electric cooperatives will not flood the streets of our nation's capital.

The Texas Youth Tour was scheduled for June 17–26, and Tri-County Electric Cooperative planned to send six high school sophomores and juniors from our service territory to join more than 150 other Texas teens.

While the cancellation was difficult to digest, it is best for the health of our youths and communities.

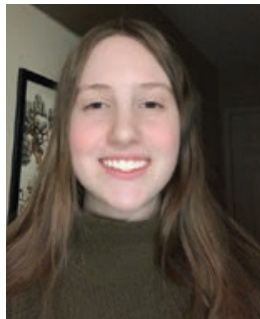
Meet the six students who won Tri-County EC's 2020 Youth Tour contest:



**Grace Bussmeir**  
Aledo High School  
Class of 2021



**Parker Davis**  
Timber Creek High School  
Class of 2021



**Wendy Nottorf**  
Keller High School  
Class of 2021



**Blaine Orsak**  
Seymour High School  
Class of 2021



**Lyndon Wright**  
Seymour High School  
Class of 2021



**Race Zweig**  
Home school / Travis  
Academy of Fine Arts  
Class of 2022

While these students will not attend Youth Tour this year, they each will receive a \$2,000 scholarship for college or trade school. 800858698

To learn more about Youth Tour and future contests, visit [tcectexas.com/youth-tour](https://tcectexas.com/youth-tour).



## Ladder Safety

**IT'S REAL SIMPLE: WHEN YOU ARE** working on a ladder, never work around power lines.

If you touch a power line, even just for a second, it could very well be the last thing you ever touch. So we simply can't stress this enough: Keep your ladder, your tools and—most important—yourself far away from power lines. 800702897



# Tri-County EC Opens New Office 80 Years After Dedication of First Building

BY BOB BUCKEL, COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA REPRESENTATIVE

**JUST LIKE TODAY, THERE WAS NO SHORTAGE OF EXCITING NEWS** in June 1940.

Less than two weeks earlier, German troops marched into Paris. America's ally Great Britain had declared war. The United States was trying hard to stay out of World War II, choosing instead to battle unemployment and poverty on the homefront.

In North Texas, a new cooperative with the misleading name of Tri-County Electric Cooperative was working to bring electric service to rural residents in seven counties. On the bright summer Sunday afternoon of June 23, the co-op dedicated its first office, a one-story brick building on Main Street in Azle. 824000001

Eighty years later, amid the headlines of a global pandemic, Tri-County EC is opening its sixth office. The new facility, in Aledo, will house administrative, engineering, accounting, system operations and other functions. The crew will remain in Azle while the co-op assesses its options for the vintage 1964 Azle office as well as aging buildings in Keller, Granbury, Seymour and Munday.

The 1940 office opening, which included the announcement of a loan request to double the co-op's service area, made Page 3 of the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*.

Tri-County EC had been operating for a year and a half from a two-story rock building that now houses the Azle Historical Museum. Its superintendent, Mack Skidmore, lived upstairs. That building is where the co-op was officially organized, on March 20, 1939, but a long-term rental was rejected as too expensive at \$40 a month.

The co-op's board of directors chose instead to build their own office. So that February, they opened bids on a frame structure but rejected those proposals and instead instructed Skidmore to seek bids on a brick building, provided it could be built for \$4,000 or less.

That March, with membership approaching 400, the board awarded a contract to J.O. Pearson for a base bid of \$5,200.

They sent all four bids to the Rural Electrification Administration in Washington, D.C., asking for approval and a \$4,000 loan, promising to cover the remaining cost with co-op funds.

By the time they were settled in, membership had topped 500.

Speaking at the dedication, attorney R.A. Stuart predicted that within two years, the co-op would be getting its power from the soon-to-be-completed Possum Kingdom Dam. In fact, it would be years longer, since the newly organized Brazos River Electric Transmission Cooperative would be unable to complete its transmission lines until after World War II due to metal shortages.

Skidmore, board president S.D. Walker, Tarrant County schools superintendent A.D. Roach, and REA employees D.L. Grant and Kathryn Harris also spoke at the dedication of the "modern brick



**TOP: Construction on Tri-County EC's new office in Aledo has been underway since last fall. ABOVE LEFT: M.H. "Mack" Skidmore, Tri-County EC's first superintendent, speaks at what is likely the June 23, 1940, dedication of the co-op's first building. ABOVE RIGHT: The cornerstone of Tri-County EC's first building is still visible at 413 W. Main St. The building, next door to Azle's new City Hall, is now an attorney's office.**

structure." The building not only had offices but display space, sales rooms and storage.

Roach told the gathering that extending electric lines to the country was helping conserve one of the nation's greatest assets—its rural population. Harris invited the "new electricity users" to attend a home appliance demonstration in the high school auditorium. Walker told the small gathering that the project was conceived at a meeting at the Liberty School in October 1938.

"Skeptics said at that time that the thing couldn't be done," he recalled, "but we have proven that it could, and its success already is assured."

There are still skeptics, of course, but after 80 years, Tri-County EC continues to move forward. Membership today is more than 91,000, spread across 16 North Texas counties, and the co-op spirit and values are still as strong as they were in 1940.





**Parker County Stock Show**  
JUNE 5-12



**Parker County Peach Festival**  
JULY 11

# Your Co-op's Community Calendar

## June

2-3

Haskell Wild Horse Prairie Days,  
haskelltexasusa.com

4

East Parker County Chamber Golf Tour-  
nament, eastparkercounty-chamber.com

4, 11, 18, 25

Keller Summer Nights, cityofkeller.com

5-12

Parker County Stock Show,  
parkercountylivestockshow.com

5, 12, 19, 26

Music in the Park, cityofazle.org

9-13

Parker County Sheriff's Posse Frontier  
Days Rodeo, pcsp.net

**NOTE:** Events are subject to postponement or cancellation due to COVID-19 guidance. Please check the event resource for updates.

Interested in promoting  
your event in the next issue  
of *Texas Co-op Power*?

## July

4

Independence Day, Tri-County EC offices  
closed

8

Tri-County EC District 1 Meeting

9

Tri-County EC District 4 Meeting

11

Parker County Peach Festival,  
parkercountypeachfestival.org

Email [pr@tcectexas.com](mailto:pr@tcectexas.com) with the  
event name, date and where readers  
can find more information.

## Tri-County Electric Cooperative

600 NW Parkway, Azle 76020

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jorden Wood, President  
Todd Smith, Vice President  
John Killough, Secretary-Treasurer  
Jerry A. Walden  
Steve V. Harris  
Dr. Jarrett Armstrong  
Max Waddell  
Larry Miller

### GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Darryl Schriver

## Contact Us

**CALL US**  
(817) 444-3201

**FIND US ON THE WEB**  
[tcectexas.com](http://tcectexas.com)

**EMAIL US**  
[pr@tcectexas.com](mailto:pr@tcectexas.com)

### COOPERATIVE OFFICES

**Aledo Office**  
200 Bailey Ranch Road, Aledo 76008

**Azle Office**  
600 NW Parkway, Azle, TX 76020  
(817) 444-3201

**Granbury Office**  
1623 Weatherford Highway, Granbury 76048  
(817) 279-7010

**Keller Office**  
4900 Keller Hicks Road, Fort Worth 76244  
(817) 431-1541

**Seymour Office**  
419 N. Main, Seymour 76380  
(940) 888-3441

### IT PAYS TO STAY INFORMED!

Find your account number in pages 18-25 of *Texas Co-op Power*, and you will receive a \$20 credit on your TCEC electric bill. Simply contact one of the offices listed above and make them aware of your discovery!

 Find us on  
**Facebook**

# Sponge Cake With Praline Topping

CAROL MISFELDT | FORT WORTH

Celebrate National Pralines Day, June 24, with this delicious recipe.

## CAKE

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ cup milk
- 1 teaspoon butter

## TOPPING

- ⅓ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¼ cup milk
- ⅛ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup pecan pieces
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup coconut

- 1. CAKE:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, beat together sugar, flour and baking powder. Heat milk, but do not boil, and add in butter. Add wet ingredients to the flour mixture and mix. Pour into a greased 9-by-9-inch pan.
- 2.** Bake 24 minutes or until done. 800731184



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- 3. TOPPING:** While cake is baking, mix together topping ingredients. Blend and spread on baked cake.
- 4.** Broil cake with topping 3–5 minutes until bubbly and brown. Watch closely, as it can burn easily. Enjoy!

## Tri-County EC Member Recipe Submission Form

NAME

CITY

EMAIL or PHONE NUMBER

RECIPE NAME

### Please return to:

**Email:** Please include the above information with your recipe and send to [pr@tcectexas.com](mailto:pr@tcectexas.com).

**Mail:** Please detach and submit this form with your recipe and mail to:

Tri-County Electric Cooperative  
Attn: Recipe Submission  
600 NW Parkway, Azle, TX 76020

