



MESSAGE
FROM
GENERAL
MANAGER

CODY
LASATER

A Gift From Those Who Got Us Here

THE ORIGINAL MEMBER-OWNERS of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative gave us a gift that lives on every time you elect members to the board of directors, earn capital credits or light up your Christmas tree.

The rural Texans who worked together to build your electric cooperative are the reason you can turn on the lights, watch your favorite holiday movies and cook a Christmas feast.

During the holiday season, remember the determined folks who helped bring electricity to the rural communities and farms that the big electricity companies refused to serve. Our urban neighbors were enjoying the quality of life that electricity delivers decades earlier because the density of big cities made it economically viable to build distribution lines between close-together residents.

Some 80 years ago, our area, with its spread-out farms and ranches, got left behind until our co-op's founders secured the funds to build electric lines over miles and miles of Texas countryside.

Perhaps your grandparents or your neighbors' relatives collected membership fees as they got things started and shared those stories. Or maybe you heard tales of families' first Christmases with electricity. Imagine opening presents under a shining lightbulb for the first time rather than a candle or lamp, or having a refrigerator to keep Christmas dinner fixings fresh.

Those folks sacrificed so their families could enjoy lighting, heat and the convenience of appliances—just like those who lived in the cities. They laid the foundation for the at-your-fingertips electric, phone and internet service that you enjoy today.

The holiday season, with its warmth and bounty, is a great time to appreciate our co-op's founding stories and the gift of modern conveniences that electricity brings to our lives.

When you take your Christmas dinner out of the oven this season or when you switch on your electric heat to make the house cozy over the holiday, remember those who lived without the convenience of electricity—and that they wanted it so badly they took matters into their own hands.

They passed that gift on to the next generations of co-op owners so we can enjoy it this Christmas and all year long. ■



FRANKREPORTER | ISTOCK.COM

Switch to LED Holiday Lights This Year

IF YOU'RE PLANNING to deck the halls with your years-old incandescent holiday lights, as you do every Christmas season, it's time to break tradition and switch to LEDs. They're more efficient and durable and last longer than your old strands. They're cool to the touch and won't burn out for a very long time if used correctly.

Their ability to stay cool makes them safer to hang on a Christmas tree, from your roof or on your balustrade.

They won't send your holiday electric bills through the roof, and they offer about the same quality of light as your originals.

LEDs are a holiday gift to yourself that keeps on giving year-round: The bulbs use 75% less energy and last about 25 times longer than incandescent lights.

They are a bit more expensive to purchase than traditional light strands, but the energy savings will offset that before Santa makes it down the chimney. ■

Hamilton County EC Scholarships Available



WILL YOUR 2022 high school graduate need college money? Hamilton County Electric Cooperative will award scholarships for the 2022–2023 school year (\$500 per fall and spring semester).

To be eligible, your student must:

- ▶ Be a senior attending a high school within the HCEC service area and graduating in May 2022.
- ▶ Be a dependent of an active HCEC member.
- ▶ Reside full time in the home of a parent or guardian who is a full-time resident in Hamilton County EC's service area.
- ▶ Have applied for admission as a full-time student to a technical school, college or university.

Scholarship winners must use the scholarship within one year of issuance.

Applications are now available and will be accepted until March 31, 2022. Scholarship winners will be chosen by a committee independent of Hamilton County EC. For more information and an application, contact Keela Payne at (254) 386-9428 or keela.payne@hamiltonelectric.coop. ■

DID YOU KNOW?

Electric water heaters account for about 12% of a typical home's electric bill? Save on water heating by setting the temperature to 120 degrees.

MARCO LEONIDDI | ISTOCK.COM



POWER TIP

This winter, make sure that your thermostat isn't near any sources of cold air that might skew the reading and make the heater run more.

CHOREOGRAPH | ISTOCK.COM



Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

CONTACT US

112 E. Gentry St., Hamilton
P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531

Local (254) 386-3123

Toll-Free 1-800-595-3401

Web hamiltonelectric.coop

General Manager

Cody Lasater

Board of Directors

Robert Straley, President, District 4

Dusty Duncan, Vice President, District 5

Brandon Haile, Secretary-Treasurer, District 2

Jack Caldwell, District 1

Sam Campbell, District 6

Ervin Koerth, District 3

John Priddy, District 7

24/7

Outage Hotline Numbers

For information and to report outages, please call us.

LOCAL

(254) 386-3123

TOLL-FREE

1-800-595-3401

ABOUT HAMILTON COUNTY EC

HCEC owns and maintains more than 4,000 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 12,000 members in Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills and San Saba counties.

PAYMENT OPTIONS AND LOCATIONS

Online at hamiltonelectric.coop

Call 1-877-833-4031 to pay using our automated phone system (credit/debit card or check).

Bank draft can be set up or bill payments can be charged to a debit or credit card monthly.

Hamilton County EC Office

112 E. Gentry, Hamilton

Brown & Wesson Insurance

915 Third St., Goldthwaite

Fort Gates Water Corporation

103 Gateway Circle, Gatesville

Kempner Water Supply

11986 E. Highway 190, Kempner

Lometa City Hall

109 W. San Saba St., Lometa

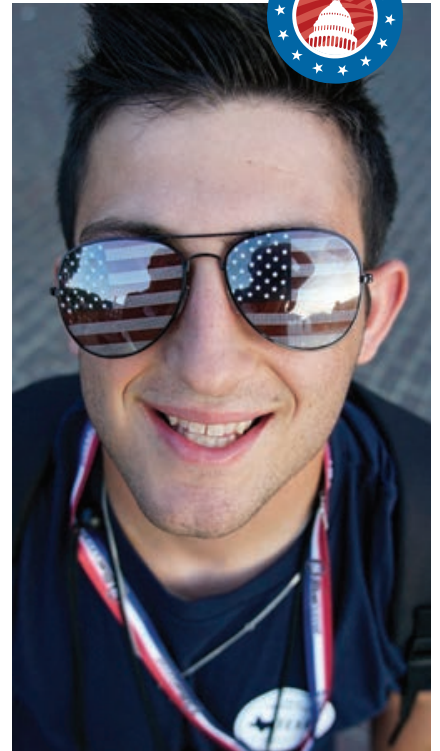
VISIT US ONLINE

hamiltonelectric.coop

THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME

GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION
**YOUTH
TOUR**

JUNE 12-21, 2022



Are you a Texas high school student? Would you like to travel to Washington, D.C., and visit historic landmarks—all without spending a dime of your own money?

Perhaps you'd like to meet elected officials, or maybe you're looking for an inspirational experience in the company of other Texas teens. If that sounds like you, then the Government-in-Action Youth Tour is your tour. Apply now!

Call (254) 386-9428 or email Keela Payne at keela.payne@hamiltonelectric.coop

Start your adventure at TexasYouthTour.com.



GREG MELAND | ISTOCK.COM

Youth Tour Is Back

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC disrupted our lives in countless ways. Many of us shifted to working from home. We stopped getting together with family and friends. And of course, large gatherings were put on hold.

The Government-in-Action Youth Tour was no exception. For the first time in its more than 50-year history, Youth Tour was canceled—for two years running.

But come June, students from across the country will converge once again on Washington, D.C., for this unforgettable experience—with an itinerary that promises to be as exciting and inspiring as ever. And in true Texas fashion, the delegation from the Lone Star State is slated to be bigger than ever before.

All of us in Co-op Country were saddened to see Youth Tour canceled the past two years, but we knew it was the right decision for the health and safety of all those involved. Planning and executing the trip is a massive undertaking that must account for the well-being of more than 150 Texas delegates and 20 chaperones, and the Texas Electric Cooperatives Board of Directors decided that the risk was simply too great.

Thankfully, Youth Tour is back on for 2022, and we at Hamilton County Electric Cooperative couldn't be more excited to again send students on this life-changing trip.

Youth Tour represents one of our most important investments in the future of the communities we serve. Participating students travel to Austin and Washington to learn about the critical role of electric cooperatives, meet their congressional representatives, and gain a deeper perspective on the history and mechanisms of our democracy.

Attendees often return with a renewed commitment to their hometowns, and many have gone on to become teachers, doctors, lawyers, politicians and even co-op employees in those communities.

We are honored to join our fellow Texas electric cooperatives in carrying on the enduring legacy of Youth Tour.

We encourage all eligible high school students to apply. For more information about Youth Tour and how to apply, contact Keela Payne at Hamilton County EC at (254) 386-9428 or keela.payne@hamiltonelectric.coop. ■

ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS AND SENIORS:

Win a Trip to Washington, DC!

Youth Tour is June 12–21, 2022

HAMILTON COUNTY Electric Cooperative will sponsor two students on the Government-in-Action Youth Tour, an all-expenses-paid, 10-day guided trip to Austin and Washington, D.C., June 12–21, 2022. Hamilton County EC is proud to carry on its commitment to empowering local teens from its service area to participate in the trip, which is organized by Texas Electric Cooperatives.

Students selected for this opportunity join more than 150 of their peers from Texas and some 1,900 other students from across the U.S. on this fun-filled trip. Designed to give high school students insight into U.S. history, cooperatives and the workings of federal government, Youth Tour expands participants' horizons.

Electric cooperatives in Texas have participated in the program since 1965, when they joined forces to follow then-Sen. Lyndon B. Johnson's call to send students to the nation's capital to "actually see what the flag stands for and represents."

The trip starts with a day in Austin, where students tour the state Capitol, Bullock Texas State History Museum and Texas State Cemetery. They then fly to Washington for an action-packed week that includes tours of historic sites and museums and visits to congressional offices, where they meet with their U.S. representatives.

Other highlights of the trip include a wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and an evening cruise on the Potomac River. Participants also attend Youth Day, hosted by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, for a day of learning and inspirational speakers.

A sense of purpose has guided co-ops throughout their existence, and for HCEC and other electric cooperatives across the country, that means investing in our young people—the leaders of tomorrow.

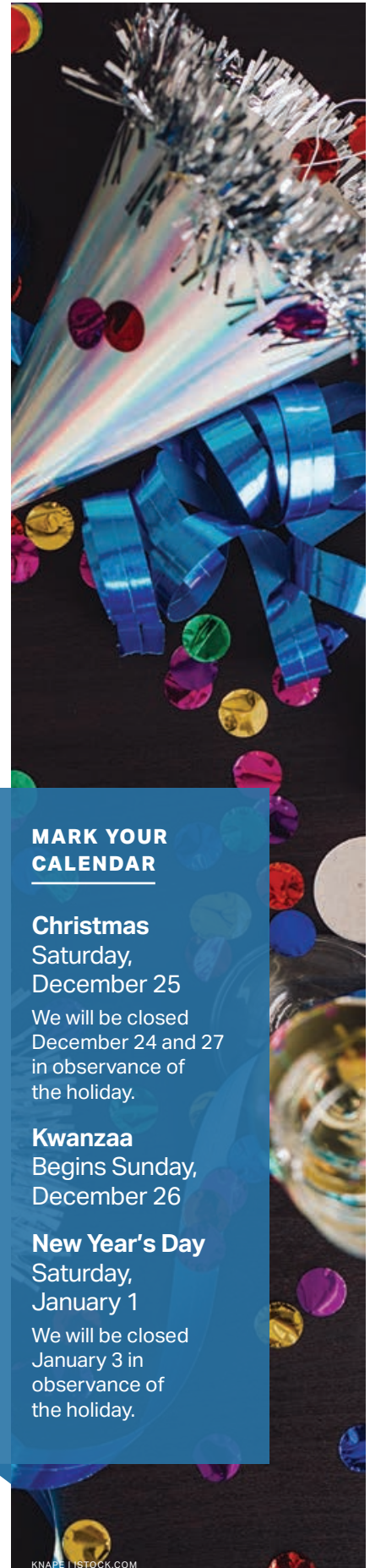
You could be a part of this legacy shared by the more than 3,800 past Texas Youth Tour students.

Eligibility: Students who have completed their sophomore year of high school and whose parent or legal guardian is a member of Hamilton County EC are eligible to apply for this trip of a lifetime.

Contest rules: Students must complete a 2022 Youth Tour application and submit an essay not to exceed 500 words on the following theme: Describe a service project that would benefit your community. The winners will be chosen according to originality and content of their essays. Essays must be attached to the completed application and submitted no later than February 11, 2022.

For more information visit texasyouthtour.com. Contact Keela Payne at HCEC at (254) 386-9428 or at keela.payne@hamiltonelectric.coop for an application.

Please note, if the COVID-19 pandemic prompts cancellation of this year's trip to Washington, alternative awards will be given to the contest winners. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Christmas

Saturday,
December 25

We will be closed
December 24 and 27
in observance of
the holiday.

Kwanzaa

Begins Sunday,
December 26

New Year's Day

Saturday,
January 1

We will be closed
January 3 in
observance of
the holiday.

Community Calendar

For information about Evant events, contact P-Cay Burkhalter at (254) 791-5441 or pcay@buenavistawildlifefafari.com.

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative is actively monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic. The following community event information was gathered in late October with sincere hopes that these events will be held. Please contact event sources directly to confirm event dates and details.

Comanche

Comanche Market, December 4, 9 a.m.–noon, Comanche courthouse square, 101 W. Central Ave.

Christmas Party and Open House, December 5, 1–4 p.m., Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road. Class of '57 band, snacks and desserts. For more information call the museum at (325) 356-5115.

Christmas Lighted Parade, December 11, Comanche courthouse square, 101 W. Central Ave.

Jingle Mingle, December 12, noon–1 p.m., at the depot.

Tour of Homes, December 12, 1–4 p.m.

For more information about Comanche County events, contact the Comanche Chamber of Commerce at (325) 356-3233 or comancheevents@gmail.com.

Copperas Cove

Tree Lighting Ceremony, December 2, 5–9 p.m., City Park, 1206 W. Ave. B.

Krist Kindl Markt, December 2–5, City Park, 1206 W. Ave. B. The Markt welcomes shoppers looking for Christmas gifts and will boast great food, unique goods, and arts and craft vendors and celebrates the spirit of the holidays.

Krist Kindl Markt Charity Pageant, December 4, 10 a.m., Civic Center, 1206 W. Ave. B. The pageant is open to girls and women of all ages and boys up to age 8. Winners are provided a float to ride in both the Copperas Cove and Killeen Christmas parades. Applications will be accepted at kristkindlpageant.myfreesites.net through November 15. All proceeds benefit the Alzheimer's Association.

Lighted Christmas Parade, December 4, 6 p.m., Avenue D.

For information about Copperas Cove events, contact the Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce at (254) 547-7571, email chamber@copperascove.com or visit copperascove.com.

Evant

Tree Lighting, December 4, Evant City Park.

Gatesville

Chamber Market Days, every second Saturday, 8 a.m.–noon, the parking lot of the historic Cotton Belt Depot, 2307 S. Highway 36. Browse vendors offering fresh fruits and veggies, metal decor, honey, salsa, jellies, baked goods, plants, homemade crafts, furniture, clothing, and much more.

Christmas Parade, December 11, 10 a.m., Main Street.

For more information about Gatesville events, call the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce at (254) 865-2617 or visit gatesvillex.info.

Goldthwaite

Photos With Santa, December 4, 5–6 p.m., Welcome Center.

Parade of Lights, December 4, 6–7 p.m., downtown. The theme for the parade is The Night Before Christmas.

For more information about Goldthwaite events, visit goldthwaiteareachamber.com, call the Goldthwaite Area Chamber of Commerce at (325) 648-3619 or email gcc@centex.net.

Hamilton

Circle T Arena, 4007 W. Highway 36. For information on upcoming events, visit



LESZEK LASHNER | ISTOCK.COM



Lampasas Farmers Market
Saturdays through December 18
LAMPASAS

ZYSMAN | ISTOCK.COM

circletarena.net/calendar or call (254) 386-3559.

Veterans Memorial, October 1–May 30, 2022. Hamilton American Legion Cunningham Post 222 is planning a new permanent memorial to Hamilton County veterans. The plan, designed by Riley-Gardner Monument Company, includes three large black granite tablets engraved with the names of the 151 Hamilton County veterans who died in battle during the various conflicts of our country. The centerpiece of the memorial will feature a large hand-carved black granite eagle resting on a black granite hexagonal base. This base will be laser-engraved with the POW/MIA emblem on the front and the emblems of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard on the other five sides. Donations to assist in the cost of the memorial are welcome, and inquiries should be directed to Darryl Moore at (337) 654-2235, Glenn Jones at (254) 784-9141 or Bob Self at (254) 386-3992.

Veterans Memorial Commemorative Brick Pavers, October 1–November 30. Commemorative brick pavers to be included with the veterans memorial are available to honor current and former members of the military, regardless of when or where they served and where they lived. The engraved pavers will be used to line the sidewalk approach and outer edges of the planned Hamilton veterans memorial, to be located on the Hamilton County Historical Museum grounds. Each paver is 4 by 8 inches with the honoree's name, rank, branch of service, years of service, conflict served or any combination of significant items. The cost

is \$50 for one brick; \$40 each for two to five ordered at one time; and \$35 each for more than five bricks ordered at one time. Contact Darryl Moore at (337) 654-2235, Ira Kerby at (325) 812-4630 or Glenn Jones at (254) 784-9141 for more information.

Christmas on the Square, Courthouse Tree Lighting and Parade of Lights, December 4, downtown square. Vendors and kids activities.

Tour of Homes, December 4.

For more information about Hamilton events, visit Hamilton Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center on Facebook or at hamilton.texaschamberofcommerce.com, call (254) 386-3216, or email hamiltonchamber.tx@gmail.com.

Hico

Christmas Parade and Market, December 4, downtown.

Girls Night Out, December 16, 4–8 p.m., downtown.

For information about Hico events, visit hico.txchamber.com or [facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce](https://www.facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce), call (254) 434-1249, or email chamberhico.tx@gmail.com or bluestarhico@gmail.com.

Kempner

Mayor's Merry Christmas, December 3, 5–6:30 p.m., Sylvia Tucker Memorial Park, 12641 U.S. Highway 190. Tree lighting ceremony followed by a movie.

For information about Kempner events, call Kempner City Hall at (512) 932-2180.

Lampasas

Christmas Tree and Gingerbread House Contests, November 27–December 18. Sponsored by the Lampasas County Museum. For more details, contact the Lampasas County Museum at (512) 556-2224 or visit lampasasmuseum.org.

Christmas on the Creek, until New Year's Day, along the banks of Sulphur Creek between Highway 190 (Key Avenue) and Highway 281. Visitors will delight to see Santa's Village, giant 12 days of Christmas cards, a larger-than-life lighted Nativity and a beautiful lights display.

Lampasas Trade Days, December 4–5, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., 2646 E. Highway 190. Antiques, collectibles, quilts, crafts, folk and fine art, new home furnishings, shabby chic furniture, new clothing, jewelry, candles, handbags, electronics, iron works, outdoor decor, plants, tools, food and more. For more information, contact Barbara Postel at (512) 734-1294.

Lampasas Farmers Market, every Saturday through December 18, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., courthouse square, Fourth Street downtown. For information contact Bob Davis at (214) 970-7556.

Carol of Lights, December 4, 11 a.m.–7 p.m., courthouse square, 501 Fourth St. The county courthouse is filled with boutique vendors, and the \$1 admission fees fund a Town and Country Study Club scholarship and some grown-up activities, but everything is free for children. Santa is on hand to see good boys and girls, and Mrs. Santa

reads stories and has crafts for the kids.

Lighted Christmas Parade, December 4, 6:30 p.m., downtown courthouse square, 501 Fourth St.

Holiday Tour of Homes, December 5, 1–5 p.m. Lampasas County Museum fundraiser. Tickets are \$10 and available at the museum, 303 S. Western Ave. As always, ticketholders will have the opportunity to visit some special historic properties along with a couple of newer and contemporary homes. For specifics, watch the *Lampasas Dispatch Record* each week, when a featured home will be included with a photograph and description. For more information contact the Lampasas County Museum at (512) 556-2224.

Christmas on the Creek Event, December 11, 5–8 p.m., W.M. Brook Park, 310 Highway 281. Guests will enjoy hot cocoa, a snow machine and Santa's Village.

For more information about Lampasas County events, contact the Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce at (512) 556-5172 or lampasasinfo@sbcglobe.net, or visit lampasaschamber.org.

Lometa

For information about Lometa events, contact the city of Lometa at (512) 752-3331.

Pearl

Pearl Bluegrass; December 4, January 8; doors open at 7 a.m.; Pearl Community Center; 6301 FM 183. Jams and stage shows throughout the day. Acoustic bands (no electric instruments) and musicians are invited. No fee to play on the stage or watch the stage shows. For information on how to sign up for the stage show, contact Anji Pearl Day at (325) 665-7996. Kitchen open 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative welcomes your local event submissions.

If you have any events that you would like listed in the Community Calendar, please contact Donna Harris. Information must be submitted two months in advance for the magazine. The calendar is published monthly and contains events scheduled in the month of publication and the following month. HCEC reserves the right to edit and exclude events based on space available and other considerations. We do not certify the accuracy or reliability of any information posted in any listing in this Community Calendar. Please contact the event source directly to confirm event details. Email donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop; write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531; or call 1-800-595-3401.

RV parking with full hook-ups available on a first-come, first-park basis; 30 amps are \$20 and 50 amps are \$25. For more information visit pearltxcommunitycenter.com or the Pearl Community Center Facebook page.

Pearl Book Cottage; December 4, January 8; 10 a.m.–5 p.m. All kinds of books and resale items. Payment by donation with all proceeds going to charity. For information call (254) 865-9282 or (254) 865-5864.

San Saba

Dancing Lights of Mill Pond Park, until January 4, 6–10 p.m., Mill Pond Park, 1007 E. Wallace St. Set your radio to 88.7 FM and enjoy music synced to over 30 acres of seasonal magic. Admission is free.

Sip-N-Stroll Wine Tasting Event, December 11, 2–6 p.m., downtown, Wallace Street. You are invited to come take a leisurely stroll through historic downtown, where several wineries will offer tastings and sales of their wines in our beautifully decorated businesses.

Lighted Christmas Parade, December 11, downtown, 6 p.m. Enter your business, organization, sports team, wagon, tractor or unique vehicle as a lighted float.

For more information about San Saba events, contact the San Saba Visitor Center at (325) 372-5200 or the chamber at (325) 372-5141, or visit sansabatexas.com/calendar or sansabachamber.org.



ALMAJE | ISTOCK.COM

Slow Cooker Apple Cider

2 quarts apple juice
1 cup cranberry juice
2½ cups unsweetened pineapple juice
1 liter ginger ale
½ cup sugar
1 cinnamon stick

Combine all ingredients in a slow cooker and cook on the low setting 2–4 hours, stirring occasionally. If you need to serve it sooner, cook on the high setting 1½–2 hours. The longer this mixture cooks, the deeper the flavor of the drink.

SERVES 24

TCP Find this and more delicious recipes online at TexasCoopPower.com.

Merry Christmas

From Hamilton County Electric Cooperative

Our offices will be closed Friday and Monday, December 24 and 27, in observance of the holiday.



MANAEMEDIA | ISTOCK.COM

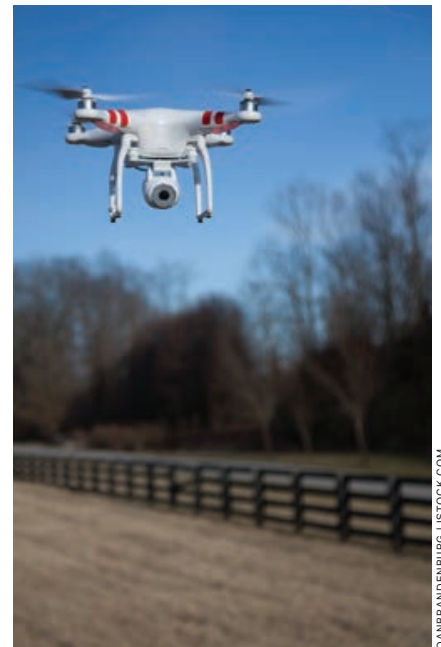
Fly Drones Safely

IF YOU FIND a drone under the Christmas tree this season, be sure to take time to learn how to use it safely.

Keep drones away from overhead power lines. If a drone flies into a power line, it could cause power outages and result in downed lines, which pose a dangerous electrical safety hazard.

Keep these other safety guidelines in mind:

- ▶ Before flying the drone, check it for damage. Have a damaged drone repaired before use.
- ▶ Never fly drones higher than 400 feet.
- ▶ Do not fly the drone beyond your line of sight.
- ▶ Do not fly near airports, manned aircraft, stadiums or people.
- ▶ Do not fly for commercial purposes, unless specifically authorized by the Federal Aviation Administration.
- ▶ Do not fly in bad weather conditions, such as in low visibility or high winds.
- ▶ Never fly your drone recklessly. You could be fined for endangering people or other aircraft. ■



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