



'Texas Co-op Power' Gets a New Look

But all your favorite content is here to stay

MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

STEVE YOUNG

YOU MIGHT HAVE NOTICED something was different when you pulled this magazine out of your mailbox this month. Perhaps you thought the cover looked a little different. Well, you're right, but the changes go deeper than that.

Texas Co-op Power has undergone a complete redesign. But even though it has a new look and feel, it's the same magazine you know and love.

Every month, *Texas Co-op Power* is delivered to you to entertain, enlighten, and educate you and your family. The magazine is a warm and friendly source for all things Texan, and like a well-informed neighbor, it can offer the secrets to making fabulous, family-pleasing meals; reveal hidden gems of the Texas landscape; and recount the humorous, quirky, solemn and often untold stories of our state's history. Also like a good neighbor, it even reminds you how to save on your electric bill.

Most importantly, *Texas Co-op Power* is one of the primary vehicles through which Hamilton County Electric Cooperative communicates directly with you, our members, and is a critical

component in our efforts to fulfill Cooperative Principle No. 5—Education, Training and Information.

Through these pages we report on matters important to the co-op, such as director elections and annual meeting details; share tips to help you maximize the energy efficiency of your home; and offer safety information that could save your life.

We also use this magazine to help you understand how new technologies—which continue to advance at a sometimes overwhelming pace—fit into your daily life.

As with everything in life, tastes change—and magazine design is no exception. While Hamilton County EC is not one to jump on the bandwagon

for the latest craze, we do realize when one of our products or services is in need of an overhaul. That's why we're excited to share this redesign with you.

For more than a year, the team behind *Texas Co-op Power* has worked diligently to update the look and feel of the magazine without sacrificing any of the content or character that inspires our members, month after month, to crack open these pages for some uniquely Texan stories—and a healthy dose of the cooperative spirit.

One of the major changes you may have noticed is the refreshed cover design and new *Texas Co-op Power* logo. The last time the logo was updated was in the mid-1990s, and though it suited that era well, sensibilities have changed. The new logo incorporates a modern feel that's in line with the magazine's evolution but sticks to its roots.

As you flip through this month's issue, you'll also see some smaller yet still significant changes, such as new colors and typefaces, new section headers, and more visually striking page layouts. Despite these changes all of your favorite content is still here.

Texas Co-op Power remains dedicated to telling the stories of Texas' unique people, history, mythology, culture and geography—the Texan way of life—as seen through the equally unique co-op lens. Readers will still enjoy all the best the magazine has to offer, from recipes, contests and event listings to travel narratives and other features, as well as local news concerning Hamilton County EC and the communities we serve. Readers can also still enjoy expanded content, contests and other special treats at TexasCoopPower.com.

The magazine has evolved with an eye toward the future, but it retains all the hallmarks that generations of electric cooperative members have cherished since the first issue in 1944. Just like Hamilton County EC, it's here to stay and better than ever. ■





HCEC Annual Meeting Canceled; Election To Go on as Planned

THE ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP Meeting of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative, originally scheduled for August 7, has been canceled due to concerns about COVID-19. It is unclear when the coronavirus will cease to spread, and we want to take a precautionary approach to protect the health, well-being and safety of our members, employees, directors and communities.

However, the election of directors by mailed ballots will carry on as planned.

To maintain equitable geographical representation of all areas on the board of directors, Hamilton County EC's bylaws provide for seven areas from which directors are to be elected.

The three-year terms of the directors representing districts 4, 6 and 7 expire this year.

- ▶ **District 4** is the area east of U.S. Highway 281 in Lampasas County served by the cooperative.
- ▶ **District 6** is the area south of U.S. Highway 84 in Mills County and west to the cooperative boundary line served by the cooperative.
- ▶ **District 7** is the area north of U.S. Highway 84 bounded on the east by the Hamilton County line and on the west by the cooperative boundary line served by the cooperative.

One ballot was mailed to each member in a separate mailing in July. Any member may vote for one candidate in each area listed on the ballot. You do not have to live in one of these areas to cast your vote. Voter membership must be confirmed for votes to be counted. Please include your name and address on the ballot return envelope so the co-op can use it to confirm voter membership. Please do not enclose bill payment in the ballot envelope.

Votes will be counted Friday, August 7. Ballots must be received in the Hamilton County EC post office box or at the HCEC office at 420 N. Rice St. in Hamilton by noon August 7, or your vote will not be counted. Results of the director elections will be posted on HCEC's website and published in the October issue of *Texas Co-op Power*. ■

Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

CONTACT US

420 N. Rice St., Hamilton
P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531
Local (254) 386-3123
Toll-Free 1-800-595-3401
Web hamiltonelectric.coop

General Manager/CEO

Steve Young

Board of Directors

Sam Campbell, President, District 6
Dusty Duncan, Vice President, District 5
Jack Caldwell, Secretary-Treasurer, District 2
Melvin Eilers Jr., District 7
Ervin Koerth, District 3
Robert Straley, District 4

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 4,008 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

420 N. Rice St., 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



JOECHO-16 | ISTOCK.COM

Government-in-Action Youth Tour Canceled

EACH YEAR HAMILTON COUNTY Electric Cooperative selects two high school students to attend the Government-in-Action Youth Tour trip to Washington, D.C. However, this year, due to concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association decided it was best to cancel the trip.

Kyndle Groves, a senior at Lometa High School, and Sawyer Wright, a junior at Hamilton High School, were selected in March to represent Hamilton County EC on Youth Tour. Each submitted an exceptional essay in response to the prompt “Should electric linemen be considered first responders? Why or why not?”

In light of this year’s Youth Tour cancellation, Hamilton County EC will award Groves a \$1,000 scholarship. She plans to study speech pathology and communication disorders this fall. Wright will attend the 2021 Government-in-Action Youth Tour, along with two other delegates who will be chosen to represent Hamilton County EC in Washington.

Each year the board of directors and staff of Hamilton County EC look forward to offering this wonderful opportunity to local students.

Following are the winning essays submitted by Groves and Wright.

Youth Tour Essay by Kyndle Groves

The consummate American hero, Superman, commonly known as Christopher Reeve, once described a hero as someone who, in spite of weakness or doubt, goes ahead and overcomes anyway. In considering Merriam-Webster’s definition of first responder as a person responsible for going immediately to the scene of an accident or emergency to provide assistance, it is easy to see that heroes walk among us every day wearing hard hats and lineman boots. Always the first to act, risking life and limb as violent storms rage and cyberattacks rally against our electrical grids, electrical linemen are the first responders that repair and protect the infrastructure that powers our lives.

When we hear the term “first responder,” we typically think of firemen, police officers and EMTs. Electric linemen fit the description, and without them, other first responders would have difficulty doing their jobs. In the wake of emergencies such as a hurricane or tornado, emergency personnel are the first ones to be notified and on that list is the electric company, restoring power in the midst of crises. In the 21st century, electricity is vital for aid efforts. The first noticeable issue after power failure is the lack of light, the light that guides surgeons’ hands through intricate operations and directs our nation’s

travelers through intersections. Access to clean running water becomes scarce because without electrical power, pumps shut down and no water runs through our faucets. Electric fuel pumps and credit cards are rendered useless, stranding motorists and rendering cash our only source of currency. Without the rapid response of electric linemen, it would be nearly impossible for the modern person to function, let alone help others.

Electric linemen put their own lives at risk to ensure the safety of others. Their duties involve climbing poles to almost unfathomable heights to repair overhead lines, digging trenches to install underground lines, installing meters, and inspecting power lines for possible repair or replacement. These jobs are risky, require a lot of skill, and involve doing



an abounding amount of people will lose power in their homes. We have relied on electricity for our way of life; our economy, our health, and simply our comfort. When we encounter the inconvenience of losing power, we began to point our fingers toward the utility companies. “Why would the utility workers let this happen?” The truth is these linemen are not just out in the conditions we are all seeking cover from but are hanging hundreds of feet up in the air while working with electricity!

While risking their lives, the workers have to work diligently and efficiently; one wrong move and you could lose a limb or even your life. These first responders come from every part of the country to help when needed, clearing away debris depending on the situation, reinstalling new electrical poles, fixing



things that many others would not be brave enough to do.

Cyberattacks targeting the electrical grid have become a living nightmare for most U.S. power companies. When the Ukraine power grid was the victim of a cyberattack in December 2015, it was the country’s electric linemen who prevented national catastrophe. Thanks to linemen, despite having most of their critical computers wiped out by malware, Ukrainian power companies quickly restored power when linemen at each of the impacted electric companies physically drove to each substation, switching them to manual control.

Once upon a time, Merriam-Webster’s definition of emergency responder may have been accurate, but today electric linemen have joined the ranks of heroic first responders. They are the first to act, putting their own lives at risk for the safety of others, as the hard hat crusaders of and our first line of defense against electric grid cyberattacks. It is high time that they were included in the definition of first responders.

Youth Tour Essay by Sawyer Wright

We honor and praise our first responders as much as we possibly can, because there is no doubt that they deserve the recognition. But in the background, there is an unsung hero going without appreciation. Electric linemen should be considered first responders just as paramedics, firemen, and police officers.

On a typical spring day, a large severe storm will roll in, and

and replacing damaged lines, and restoring power all to keep us safe. There is no “end of the day” for these people. Leaving their loved ones and the comfort of their homes, these heroes head off to reestablish comfort into multiple people’s lives without a single hesitation. The always on-call workers will work tirelessly around the clock until the job is done, which could be throughout the night and day. In all realness, most first responders cannot even begin to rescue and aid victims until after the area has been cleared by the linemen. Sure the firefighters, paramedics, and other emergency personnel may arrive first on the scene after a hurricane or tornado, but no one can begin to enter without an “all clear” from the electrical linemen. Without them investigating first, more lives are at stake. Search and rescue teams going into broken-down houses and wading through deep waters to help people could easily become electrocuted. Linemen literally must become the first responders for these situations.

These proficient men and women light our homes and put themselves in harm’s way so our everyday routine is not interrupted. These electrical workers are sons, daughters, mothers, and fathers who deserve all the recognition for what they do for us. Aside from not having the title, electric linemen have earned their right to be considered first responders. ■



DNY59 | ISTOCK.COM

Scholarships Awarded to 10 Students

EACH YEAR HAMILTON COUNTY Electric Cooperative provides the opportunity for high school seniors to apply for \$1,000 scholarships. The scholarships are contingent on full-time enrollment at any technical school, college or university.

This year HCEC awarded 10 scholarships across the cooperative's service area. Winners are chosen by a committee that is independent of HCEC. The board of directors and staff

of Hamilton County EC would like to congratulate these students and wish them much success in continuing their education.

For more information and to download a scholarship application, visit our website, hamiltonelectric.coop, or contact Keela Payne at (254) 386-9428 or keela.payne@hamiltonelectric.coop



JAYCE ANDERSON
Copperas Cove High School



TAYLOR DOYLE
Evant High School



ZOE-ANASTASIA DUDLEY
Priddy High School



AVARY FINSTAD
Jonesboro High School



LAUREN HOLLY THOMAS
Home school



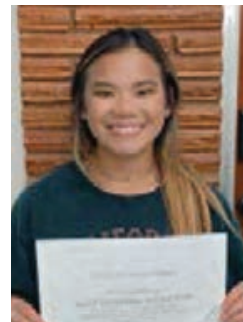
JESSICA HORTON
Goldthwaite High School



ABIGAIL KILLIAN
Hamilton High School



KATELYN OSBURN
Lampasas High School



SAGE THOMPSON
Lometa High School



JILL TRUSS
Gatesville High School



MARKPHARIS | ISTOCK.COM

COVID-19 To Impact Co-ops Nationwide for Years To Come

AS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC has caused local businesses to close their doors and hardworking Americans to lose their jobs, new economic projections show the nation’s electric cooperatives could suffer up to \$10 billion in lost revenue through 2022. The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association is asking Congress to step in.

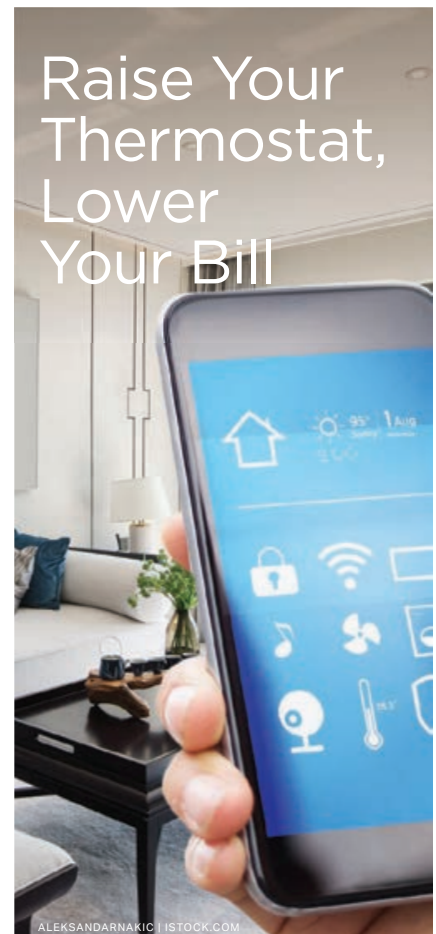
New research shows that electric co-op operating revenues are expected to decline by \$7.4 billion as electricity sales fall by 5% through 2022 due to lower U.S. economic output. And a surge in unemployment coupled with mandatory and voluntary moratoriums on service disconnections in 46 states is expected to increase the balance of unpaid electric bills to \$2.6 billion through 2022.

“The economic health of electric co-ops is directly tied to the well-being of their local communities,” said Jim Matheson, NRECA CEO. “As the economic impact of this pandemic spreads, electric co-ops will be increasingly challenged as they work to keep the lights on for hospitals, grocery stores and millions of new home offices. Policymakers should be mindful of the economic threat facing rural communities and their electric cooperatives by taking steps to prevent the possibility of significant disruptions.”

Not-for-profit electric cooperatives have no shareholders, are owned by the communities they serve and routinely return excess revenues to their consumer-members. Lost revenue can severely constrain the ability of certain electric co-ops to meet the needs of their communities. Rural electric co-ops face high fixed costs, particularly from their responsibility to maintain 42% of the nation’s electric distribution lines to serve just 13% of the nation’s electric consumers.

“Electricity powers the American economy, and a stalled economy uses less energy,” said Russell Tucker, NRECA’s chief economist. “As GDP growth falls in the wake of COVID-19, co-op electricity sales are projected to decline. We expect reductions in electric co-op sales of 6.1% in 2020, 6% in 2021 and 3% in 2022.”

Despite these challenges, Hamilton County Electric Cooperative will continue to provide you with the same reliable service you deserve and have come to expect. ■



Raise Your Thermostat, Lower Your Bill

Conserve electricity in hot weather and help reduce high energy bills.

Setting your thermostat to 78 (and a few degrees higher when you’re away) will make a difference. Each degree you increase can save 3%–5%.

Save even more!

Turn off and unplug unused lights and appliances.

Close shades and blinds during the day to reduce heat loss.

Open them to save energy on cool evenings.

Change air conditioning filters.

A full freezer costs less to run than an empty one.

Hamilton County EC encourages you to always use energy efficiently.

Community Calendar



JONATHAN LONG | ISTOCK.COM

Food Truck Festival
August 22
COPPERAS COVE

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

Comanche

De Leon Peach and Melon Festival and Tractor Pull, August 5–8, De Leon Community Park, 5401 Highway 6, De Leon. Visit

peachandmelonfestival.net for more information.

39th Annual Pow Wow, September 26–27, 10 a.m.–4 p.m., Comanche City Park. Bernie McBee BBQ cook-off, photography and art contests, TMRA Motorcycle Show, Comanche County Car Club Car Show, food, vendors, free kids games and fun family entertainment.

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

Copperas Cove

Food Truck Festival, August 22, 6–10 p.m., City Park, 1206 W. Ave. B. Sponsored by the city of Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation Department. \$5 parking, \$1 walk-ins. This fourth annual event is '80s-themed and will include a lineup of various food trucks, beer and wine tents, live music, games, kids' activities and market vendors. Come dressed in your best '80s gear! The Food Truck Festival is family-oriented and suitable for all ages.

Gallop or Trot 5K, September 19, City Park, 1206 W. Ave. B. The 5K winds through the city park and gentle rolling hills in Copperas Cove's residential area. Medals will be awarded to the top three winners in each age category (male and female). There will also be an award for the overall male and female winners. Register at runsignup.com/race/tx/copperascove/hebplusgalloportrot. For information about Copperas Cove events, contact the Copperas Cove Chamber of Commerce at (254) 547-7571, email activities@copperascove.com or visit copperascove.com.

Evant

For information about Evant events, contact Charlotte Looney at cben1115@hotmail.com or (512) 750-9870.

Gatesville

Chamber Market Days, second Saturday of each month in the parking lot of the historic Cotton Belt Depot, 2307 S. Highway 36. Vendors display unique merchandise and farm-fresh foods. For more information visit gatesvilletx.info.

Spurfest, September 19, 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Coryell Museum and Historical Center, 718 Main St. Free admission. A celebration of our frontier and cowboy heritage featuring old-time demonstrations, arts and crafts vendors, music, and more than 6,000 spurs in the Lloyd Mitchell Collection. Come help us celebrate Gatesville's 150th birthday! For information or availability of booth space rental, contact Ervin Adams at (254) 865-5007, email coryellmuseumhc@yahoo.com or visit coryellmuseum.org.

For more information about Gatesville events, go to visitgatesvilletx.com or gatesvilletx.info, or call the Gatesville Chamber of Commerce at (254) 865-2617 or Gatesville Convention and Visitors Bureau at (254) 865-8951.

Goldthwaite

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

Hamilton

Circle T Arena, 4007 W. Highway 36. For information about upcoming events, visit circletarena.net/calendar or call (254) 386-3559.

Hamilton County Dove Festival, September 5, downtown. Parade at 10 a.m., live music, vendors, entertainment for families, car show, softball tournament and more. For more information visit facebook.com/hamiltondovefestival.

Hamilton County Heritage Days, September 4–5, Hamilton Fair Park. Enjoy a weekend full of concerts, match horse races, vendors, a rodeo and much more. Visit facebook.com/hamiltonheritagedays for more information.

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

Hico

For information about Hico events, visit hicochamber.com or facebook.com/hicochamberofcommerce, call (254) 434-1249, or email chamberhicox@gmail.com.

Kempner

School Supply Giveaway, August 15, 8:30 a.m., Sylvia Tucker Memorial Park, 12641 E. U.S. Highway 190.

For more information about Kempner events, call (512) 932-2180.

Lampasas

Lampasas Trade Days; August 1, September 5; 9 a.m.–4 p.m.; 2646 E. Highway 190. Come meet the artists and craftsmen who create these one-of-a-kind items. Merchandise includes antiques, collectables, quilts, crafts, folk and fine art, new home furnishings, shabby chic furniture, new clothing, jewelry, candles, handbags, electronics, iron works, outdoor decor, plants, tools, great food concessions and more. We have a little bit of everything. For more information contact Barbara Postel at (512) 734-1294.

Riata Roundup Rodeo, September 10–12, Lampasas 580 Sports Complex Arena,

2351 FM 580. Admission: Thursday free; Friday and Saturday adults \$10, children 3–12 \$5, 2 and under free. Events include calf roping, bronc riding, kids activities, team roping, mutton busting (buckles awarded), vendors, calf scramble, breakaway, barrel racing, steer wrestling, bull riding and more. For more information on how to become a vendor, take part in the queen competition or attend the event, contact the Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce.

Lampasas Beer Barn LTX BBQ Fest, September 11–12, 580 Sports Complex, 2351 FM 580. Taster's Choice, Friday, 6–8 p.m. Admission: adults \$10, children 3–12 \$5, 2 and under free. Live music September 12: the Midnight Wranglers.

Indian Artifact, Gem and Mineral Show; September 19; 9 a.m.–4 p.m., Youth Livestock Show Barn, S. Highway 281.

Lampasas County Wine Tour, September 26, 8 a.m.–5:15 p.m., Lampasas County Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, 205 S. Highway 281.

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

Lometa

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

Pearl

Pearl Bluegrass First Saturday Jam and Stage Show; August 1, September 12; Pearl Community Center. Free stage shows 12:30–5 p.m. Open jamming all day and evening Thursday–Saturday. RV hookups \$15/\$20 per night. Bluegrass Café is 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Saturday. Family-friendly event that bluegrass and old-time music lovers of all ages will enjoy. For more information visit pearlbluegrass.com.

Pearl Book Cottage; August 1, September 12; 10 a.m.–6 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.

Community Meal, third Thursday of each month, 11:30 a.m., Pearl Baptist Church,

Highway 183. Contact Connie at (254) 223-0621.

Pidcoke

Pidcoke Communitywide Yard Sale, August 1, 7 a.m.–3 p.m., Pidcoke United Methodist Church, 11230 FM 116 N. (halfway between Gatesville and Copperas Cove). Vendors welcome at no charge, setup at 6 a.m. Proceeds go to purchase elementary school supplies for children in need in Gatesville, Copperas Cove and Kempner. Contact Rex Hooten at (325) 660-3547 for vendor space or for more information.

For more information about Pidcoke United Methodist Church events, call (254) 300-6342 or visit pidcoke-umc.org.

San Saba

San Saba County Historical Museum, each Saturday and Sunday through October, 1:30–4 p.m., housed within Mill Pond Park, 110 Thomas Stewart Drive. To schedule a tour during the week, email info@sansabamuseum.org. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated.

San Saba Farmers Market, August 5, 5 p.m. till sold out, San Saba County Courthouse. The market will continue each Wednesday through August. For setup information call (325) 372-4029.

Golf Tournaments; Three-Person Shamble, August 8–9; Club Championship, August 22–23; One-Person Scramble, September 19; San Saba River Golf Course; CR 102. For information visit golfsansaba.com or call (325) 372-3212.

Pro Rodeo Days, August 21–22, 6–10:30 p.m., San Saba Rodeo Arena, 1951 N. Highway 16. For additional information contact San Saba Rodeo and Livestock Association at (325) 372-8887.

Rodeo Parade, August 22, 10 a.m., downtown.

San Saba Community Diez y Seis de Septiembre Celebration, September 12, Risien Park. For more information call (325) 372-5200.

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

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 will be published monthly, and it will contain events scheduled in the month of publication and the following two months. 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.