



MESSAGE FROM GENERAL MANAGER CODY LASATER

## Supporting Communities Is the Co-op Way

AS SOME OF YOU know, cooperatives across the globe adhere to the same Seven Cooperative Principles, which guide our decisions—from how we run the co-op to how we engage with our communities.

Concern for Community is the seventh principle, and it’s one of the most cherished among the employees of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative. During the holiday season, this principle seems especially important.

Electric cooperatives have a proud history of supporting the communities that built them. From scholarships to direct charitable donations, Hamilton County EC steps up to help our members, their friends and families, and neighbors.

Electric cooperatives’ commitment to community extends globally too. Co-ops across the country have donated equipment and sent lineworkers to other countries—to help bring power to people who have never experienced the benefits of electricity.

So many families go without on a daily basis and struggle to make ends meet. This struggle can be especially hard during the holiday season.

There are many ways you can give back to the community that go beyond dollars and cents. Take some time to go through your closets and find clothes that no longer fit or you don’t use. Bag them up and take them to a local charity or church clothing drive. Volunteer for a local food or toy drive, deliver meals to the sick and older adults, or simply make a meal for a neighbor in need.

No matter how great or small the act, every time we lend a hand, we strengthen our community. So take time this holiday season to think about your neighbors. If you’re like me, you’ll feel all the better for it.

I hope you enjoy a wonderful holiday season filled with happiness and love. ■

## Director Election Results

ON OCTOBER 1, the membership of Hamilton County Electric Cooperative reelected the following members to its board of directors:

**Brandon Haile**, District 2

**Dusty Duncan**, District 5

The board met October 31 and elected officers. The following members comprise the Hamilton County EC Board of Directors:

**Robert Straley**, president, Lampasas, District 4

**Dusty Duncan**, vice president, Lometa, District 5

**Brandon Haile**, secretary-treasurer, Hamilton, District 2

**Jack Caldwell**, Evant, District 1

**Ervin Koerth**, Gatesville, District 3

**Sam Campbell**, Goldthwaite, District 6

**John Priddy**, Priddy, District 7 ■

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day**  
Saturday, December 7

**Christmas Hanukkah begins**  
Wednesday, December 25  
Our office will be closed Tuesday–Wednesday, December 24–25, in observance of the holidays.

**New Year’s Day**  
Wednesday, January 1  
Our offices will be closed.

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# Official Notice of Capital Credits Retirement

IN SEPTEMBER, the Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors voted to retire \$2,917,393 in capital credits owed to its members for the years 1989–96. Members who had electric service for one or more years within this period will be eligible for a return.

Returns exceeding \$50 will be distributed via check in late December. Active members receiving a return of less than \$50 will see the amount credited on their billing statement in early January 2025. Inactive members will receive a capital credits check regardless of the amount.

This article is intended to serve as the official notice of the retirement of capital credits for 1989–96. ■

# Official Notice of Capital Credits Allocations

HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE recently allocated capital credits to its members for 2023.

At the end of each fiscal year, cooperatives determine the margins made during the year by deducting the expense of operating the cooperative from the revenue received from the sale of electricity. These margins are then allocated to each member's account based on their electric use. Once these margins are allocated, they are referred to as capital credits.



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Capital credits remain invested in the cooperative until the co-op's board of directors determines that a retirement would not weaken the cooperative financially. To date, Hamilton County EC has retired \$4,749,372.68 of its capital credits obligations for the years 1947–88.

It's very important that departing members keep the cooperative informed of their current mailing addresses so they can receive capital credits when they're returned.

Members can calculate their capital credits for 2023

by multiplying the sum of their electric service bills for 2023 by 0.0703. For example, if the year-end total of your electric bills from the cooperative was \$1,000, simply multiply that amount by 0.0703, and the result is \$70.30—your capital credits allocation for 2023. In calculating your total bill, do not include any sales tax, miscellaneous charges, membership fees or deposits.

If you have any questions concerning your capital credits account, feel free to contact Hamilton County EC.

This article is intended to serve as the official notice of allocations of capital credits for 2023. ■

## Hamilton County Electric Cooperative Association

### CONTACT US

112 E. Gentry St., Hamilton, TX 76531

P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531

**Local** (254) 386-3123

**Toll-Free** 1-800-595-3401

**Web** [hamiltonelectric.coop](http://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.

**TOLL-FREE**

1-855-955-3183

### ABOUT HAMILTON COUNTY EC

HCEC owns and maintains more than 4,000 miles of line to provide electric service to more than 13,000 members in Coryell, Hamilton, Lampasas, Mills and San Saba counties.

### PAYMENT OPTIONS AND LOCATIONS

**Online** at [hamiltonelectric.coop](http://hamiltonelectric.coop)

**Call** 1-855-955-3183 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 St., Hamilton

#### Fort Gates Water Corp.

103 Gateway Circle, Gatesville

#### Head Insurance

1006 Fourth St., Goldthwaite

#### Kempner Water Supply

11986 E. Highway 190, Kempner

#### Lometa City Hall

109 W. San Saba St., Lometa

### VISIT US ONLINE

[hamiltonelectric.coop](http://hamiltonelectric.coop)



Check us out at

[TexasCoopPower.com/hamilton](http://TexasCoopPower.com/hamilton)



## Hamilton County EC Celebrates 85th Membership Meeting

BY MARIA DONAHOO  
PHOTOS BY TRACY COX

HAMILTON COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE held its 85th annual meeting October 1 at the Circle T Arena at 4007 State Highway 36 in Hamilton.

The co-op's board of directors and employees welcomed a record 535 registered members and their guests to the arena. Member attendance was up more than 50 from last year.

Attendees' first stop was registration, where co-op employees gave each member a warm welcome, a \$25 Walmart gift card and entered their registration cards for the prize drawings.

Circle T Arena's Crossfire Steakhouse and Cantina provided a mouthwatering buffet-style dinner of grilled chicken breast, fried catfish, shrimp, barbecue brisket and sausage, various sides, and cobbler for dessert for more than 1,200 people.

Robert Straley, HCEC board president, welcomed everyone at 7 p.m. and called the meeting to order. Dane Barron, pastor of First Baptist Church of Evant and an HCEC journeyman lineman, delivered the invocation. Alicia Straley performed the national anthem and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Cody Lasater, HCEC general manager, thanked everyone who helped with the meeting, including John Sally, Mary Hankins and Donna Harris. He also extended thanks to the co-ops and companies that donated prizes for the drawings. Lasater recognized HCEC employees for "their unwavering commitment and hard work, which were crucial to the success of this meeting."

Finally, Lasater acknowledged HCEC member-owners.

"We are thankful for the privilege of serving such a distinguished group of owners, who demonstrate a deep appreciation for the challenges inherent in maintaining a reliable power supply," Lasater said. "Your steadfast support is greatly appreciated, and we are here to assist you should any concerns arise."

Lasater then called on Straley for his remarks.

"We still live in a country where we are free to assemble, eat together, pray together, sing the national anthem and recite the Pledge of Allegiance," Straley said. He asked servicemen and women and first responders in the crowd to stand and be recog-



nized, affirming that, “they are the reason we continue to have our liberties.”

Straley reminded the attendees of severe weather earlier this spring, when many members experienced outages.

“There were linemen and office personnel who did not go home for over 40 hours,” he said. “The dedication and work ethic of the personnel of HCEC is second to none. They truly live by the motto ‘Owned by those we serve.’”

Straley named each employee and asked them to stand for a round of well-deserved applause.

Gregg Belcher, HCEC foreman and winner of Texas Electric Cooperatives’ Unsung Hero Award, was in attendance. The award is given to those in TEC’s loss control program who go above and beyond in regards to safety, training and education. Belcher was unanimously nominated for the award. Straley asked him to stand to be congratulated.

Members learned that HCEC has achieved over 38,167 man-hours, or 138 days, without a lost-time accident—a testament to the commitment to safety by HCEC employees and George Luker, safety coordinator.

A new outage management system was introduced last month, which makes reporting outages more efficient.

“We understand the challenges faced during extensive outages, particularly the difficulty in reaching a dispatcher and the lengthy hold times,” Straley said.

With the new system, members have more options to report outages. They can call the new number or use the SmartHub web portal or the SmartHub app. Members who use SmartHub can also take advantage of billing and payment options, alert and notification control, paperless billing, usage monitoring, and inquiry submission.

To register for SmartHub, have your billing account number handy and visit [hamiltonelectric.coop](http://hamiltonelectric.coop).

In his closing remarks, Straley thanked the management and the board of directors at HCEC for the job they do and the members for allowing him to serve on the board. “It truly is an honor,” he said.

The meeting’s business portion featured the results of the election of directors by a quorum of members voting by mail.

This year, 1,088 members voted. Bob Lilly of the law firm Carpenter & Croft declared that Dusty Duncan, District 5, and Brandon Haile, District 2, were reelected to three-year terms.

After the business portion of the meeting, the prize drawings began. The grand prize was once again a \$1,000 HCEC bill credit. Copperas Cove resident Thomas Parker was the lucky winner. An additional 85 prizes were awarded to members in attendance. ■



## Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

from Hamilton County Electric Cooperative

May you have the gift of faith, the blessing of hope and the peace of His love at Christmas and always.

Our office will be closed Tuesday–Wednesday, December 24–25, and Wednesday, January 1, in observance of the holidays.



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## Caulking: A Simple Solution to Winter Drafts

**IT'S PRETTY EASY** to keep drafts out of the house on cold and windy days: Simply seal your windows by caulking around them.

All you need is caulk and a caulk gun, which you can easily find at any home or hardware store. To make the task go faster, share caulking duties with your children. Here's what to do:

- 1.** To get started, clean the window, sill, trim and frame with a damp cloth. Allow everything to dry.
- 2.** Scrape old caulk and any peeling paint off the window and the area immediately surrounding it.
- 3.** Using the caulk gun, apply the caulk between the window frame and siding on the outdoors. Indoors, fill in the gap between the windows and the trim. Don't over-apply or the caulk can look messy.
- 4.** Depending on the age of your window, the caulk that holds the glass panes in place may also need replacing or repair.

For extra protection, add weatherstripping around doors and windows. If cold air enters the house below the door, get a draft blocker or simply roll up a bath towel and set it in front of the door to block the breeze. ■



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# New Program Offers Convenience for Members

**HAMILTON COUNTY** Electric Cooperative has implemented a new outage management system, which makes the process of reporting outages significantly easier.

We understand the challenges faced during extensive outages, particularly the difficulty in reaching a dispatcher and the lengthy hold times. Now outages can be reported simply by calling the new OMS phone number or by using the SmartHub web portal or SmartHub app.

**To make a payment or report an outage via the OMS phone line, call 1-855-955-3183 and follow the appropriate prompts.**

If the caller ID corresponds to the phone number linked to your account in our records, the outage will be reported automatically.

If the caller ID does not correspond to the phone number linked to your account in our records, you will be required to provide either the phone number on file or the account number related to the outage.

With the SmartHub web portal and mobile app, you can effectively manage your electric service account.

**Some of the advantages include:**

**Billing and payments:** Access your billing any time from anywhere and save time with easy payment options. Set up auto pay or make payments via credit card or checking. No fees!

**Alerts and notifications:** Stay informed on important information regarding your account status or real-time information regarding outages via email or text messages.

**Paperless billing:** Activate SmartHub paperless billing, an eco-friendly way to access your bill instantly.

**Usage monitoring:** Monitor your usage daily and track your habits. Compare usage trends to previous bills.

**Report outages:** Avoid those long hold times during large outages and set notifications to receive a text, email or a phone call when there's an update to your outage. You can also utilize the Track Issue Status link under Contact Us and determine if your outage was restored while not at home.

**Submit inquiries:** Instantly send inquiries for anything from address changes to tree trimming.

SmartHub is designed to empower you with complete control

over your account, providing the necessary tools to deliver timely information that aids in making informed decisions regarding your account.

**To register for SmartHub, you will need:**

- ▶ Your billing account number
- ▶ Your email address

To register, visit [hamiltonelectric.coop](http://hamiltonelectric.coop) and then click the SmartHub icon to register as a new user. After completing the registration and logging in to your SmartHub account, navigate to Settings and Manage Notifications to enable text messaging.

You may also set up notifications under the Billing, Miscellaneous and Service menus.

Additionally, you have the option to download the app to your smartphone. In your app store, search for the SmartHub app, which is represented by the green icon pictured below.

Once the app is installed, look for Hamilton and log in using your existing credentials or create a new account by entering your email and account number. To report an outage through the SmartHub mobile app, tap Report an Issue/Inquiry.



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To report an outage through the SmartHub web portal, find the link on the home page of our website. Once you log in to SmartHub, click the Report Power Outage link located in the menu options on the left of the screen.

An outage map on our website, [hamiltonelectric.coop](http://hamiltonelectric.coop), is another new feature of the new outage system. ■

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# Community Calendar

The following community event information was gathered in late October. Please contact event sources directly to confirm event dates and details.

## Comanche

**Christmas Synchronized Light Show**, after Thanksgiving, on the Comanche County Courthouse square. Tune your radio to 87.9 FM.

**Community Tree Decorating and Lighting**, December 6, 5–7 p.m., under the Fleming Oak on the courthouse square. Bring an ornament to hang on the tree. The Grinch, Cindy Lou Who and Max will be available for pictures.

**Comanche Ice Skating Rink**, beginning December 6, open Fridays 5–9 p.m., Saturdays 1–9 p.m., and Sundays 1–5 p.m. A 960-square-foot synthetic ice rink will be located in the Community Center. Free to everyone, donations appreciated.

**Comanche Market**; December 7, January 4; 9 a.m.–1 p.m., Comanche County Courthouse, 101 W. Central Ave.

**Christmas Party and Open House**, December 7, 1–4 p.m., Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road. Serving snacks and desserts. The Class of '57 band will sing and play live music along with Tommy Patterson from Comanche County.

**Santa's Workshop**, December 7, 1–4 p.m., Comanche Mercantile. An assortment of festive arts and crafts will be available for children to enjoy for free. Photos with Santa from 3 to 5 p.m. will be available for purchase and printed on-site.

**Christmas Lighted Parade**, December 7, 6 p.m., downtown.

**Tour of Homes**, December 8, 1–4 p.m. Explore some of the best Christmas-themed houses in Comanche.

**Elvis Presley Day**, January 4, 1–4 p.m., Comanche County Museum, 402 Moorman Road. Celebrate Elvis' 90th birthday with music and videos.

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

## Copperas Cove

**Krist Kindl Markt**, December 6–8, downtown. The Markt welcomes shoppers looking for those last-minute Christmas gifts

and will boast great food, feature unique retail and arts and crafts vendors, and celebrate the spirit of the holidays. Saturday evening there will be a lighted Christmas Parade that will get everyone in a festive mood.

**Polar Bear Plunge 5K**, January 18, Copperas Cove City Park, 1206 W. Avenue B. Come run or walk the annual 5K to the Polar Bear Plunge. Afterward, plunge into the freezing waters of the City Park Pool. Sponsored by Copperas Cove Parks and Recreation. For more information, call (254) 542-2719 or visit copperascovetx.gov/parks.

*For information on Copperas Cove events, call (254) 547-7571 or email chamber@copperascove.com.*

## Evant

**Christmas Market Day**, December 15, 9 a.m.–5 p.m., Evant Square, 115 E. Brooks Drive.

## Gatesville

**Christmas in the Parks**, November 30–December 31. Enjoy Christmas lights at the Sports Complex, brought to you by Gatesville First National Bank.

**Breakfast with Santa**, December 7, 9 a.m., Gatesville Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop.

**Christmas Parade**, December 14, 10 a.m.

**Holiday Market Extravaganza**, December 14, 10 a.m.–3 p.m., Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop.

**Coryell County Youth Fair**, January 6–11, Civic Center, 301 Veterans Memorial Loop.

*For information about Gatesville events, see visitgatesvilletx.com or email gatesvillecoc@gmail.com.*

## Goldthwaite

**Mills County Historical Museum**, Monday–Friday, 10 a.m.–2 p.m., 1119 Fisher St. Free.

**Goldthwaite Theatre**, 1206 Fisher St. For information on upcoming events, call (325) 451-1811 or visit goldthwaitetheatre.org.

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

**Christmas on the Square**, December 5.

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

## Hico

**Christmas Market**, December 7, 11 a.m. Vendors featuring handmade goods, boutique items, jewelry, knives and so much more.

**Christmas Light Parade**, December 7, 6 p.m., downtown.

**Girls Night Out**, December 19, 4–8 p.m. Participating businesses will have treats, door prizes and special discounts.

*For more information about Hico events, contact the Hico Chamber of Commerce at (254) 434-1249 or chamberhicoctx@gmail.com.*

## Lampasas

**Lampasas County Farmers Market and Crafts**, Saturdays, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., Courthouse Square.

**Toy Drive and Lunch**, December 2, 11 a.m.–2 p.m., Lampasas Fire Department.

**Carol of Lights**, December 7, 5:30 p.m., Courtyard Square. Activities include vendors, antique car show and Snow Queen contest.

**Gingerbread House and Christmas Tree Contests**, December 7, Lampasas County Museum, 303 S. Western Ave. For more information, call the Lampasas County Museum at (512) 556-2224.

**Lighted Christmas Holiday Parade**, December 7, 6:30 p.m., downtown.

**Holiday Tour of Homes**, December 8, 1–5 p.m. For information, call the Lampasas County Museum at (512) 556-2224.

**Christmas on the Creek**, December 14, 5–8 p.m., W.M. Brook Park. See Santa's Village, giant 12 Days of Christmas cards, lighted nativity and a beautiful lights display.

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

## Lometa

**First Friday Farmer's Market**, December 6, West Railway. For more information, email Jennifer Wisian at [jmwisian@gmail.com](mailto:jmwisian@gmail.com) or visit [lometchamber.com](http://lometchamber.com).

**Fiesta Winery Pick Up Party and Christmas Market**, December 14, 11 a.m.–6 p.m., Fiesta Winery at Bend, 18727 W. FM 580. Sip and shop local vendors and visit with Santa Claus. Live music by Monte Rose, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., and Backroads Band, 2–6 p.m. For more information, call (325) 628-3433 or email [info@fiestawinery.com](mailto:info@fiestawinery.com).

## Pearl

**Pearl Bluegrass**; December 7, January 4; doors open at 7 a.m.; Pearl Community Center; 6301 FM 183. Free admission. Come join others to pick or just to listen. Jam rooms for all levels. Open mic opportunities begin at 10 a.m. Sign up upon arrival. The kitchen opens at 11 a.m., home cooking and desserts, cash only. Proceeds benefit the Pearl Community Center. For RV spaces, call Connie at (254) 223-0621. For more information, follow us on Facebook at Pearl Community Center Texas or visit [pearlbluegrassjam.org](http://pearlbluegrassjam.org).

**Pearl Book Cottage**; December 7, January 4; 9 a.m.–3 p.m. Junk-in-your-trunk and farmers market outside of the book cottage. Vendor booths are \$5. Books and resale items will be available inside the building. For information, call Kay Pruett at (254) 865-5864 or Linda Ray at (254) 865-9282.

## San Saba

**Pecan Capital Trade Days**, December 7, 9 a.m.–2 p.m., courthouse.

**Sip N' Stroll Wine Tasting**, December 14, 2–6 p.m., downtown. Texas Hill Country wineries will offer tastings and sales as you stroll through beautifully decorated businesses. With each ticket purchase, you will receive 10 wine tastings. All wineries will have signature wines for sale by the glass or bottle.

**Lighted Christmas Parade**, December 14, 6:30 p.m., downtown.

*For more information about San Saba events, contact the San Saba County Chamber of Commerce at (325) 372-5141 or visit [sansabachamber.org](http://sansabachamber.org) or [sansabatexas.com](http://sansabatexas.com).*



### DID YOU KNOW?

Animals are more sensitive to electric currents than humans. If you notice pets avoiding electrical objects, call a licensed electrician.

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**Gingerbread House and Christmas Tree Contests**  
December 7  
LAMPASAS

EYEEM MOBILE GMBH | ISTOCK.COM

**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 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](mailto:donna.harris@hamiltonelectric.coop), write to HCEC at P.O. Box 753, Hamilton, TX 76531, or call 1-800-595-3401.



### POWER TIP

If you're heading out of town this holiday, remember to lower your home and water heater thermostats a few degrees to reduce energy consumption.

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