

# Making 2019 Better Together



## MESSAGE FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER ROBERT A. LOTH III

**A BRAND-NEW YEAR IS UPON US, AND JUST AS** many of our members might, we at Central Texas Electric Cooperative have a few resolutions. In our ongoing quest to provide reliable electric service and respon-

sources like renewables, we can negotiate the best rates and ensure that our members always have access to safe and reliable power. We resolve this year to uphold this commitment as staunchly as ever.

Finally, we expect to maintain our involvement in community outreach efforts and projects. These contributions, whether through Operation Round Up, food drives or donations to local fire departments, get to the core of who we are and articulate our enduring Concern for Community. We resolve to keep doing our part to uplift our community across a broad spectrum of charitable endeavors.

As a complement to our resolutions, here are a few we'd like to propose to you to get the most out of your co-op membership.

Make a point of attending Central Texas EC's annual meeting. There simply is no better, more direct or immediate method for making your voice heard: You can vote in important elections to determine your cooperative's leadership, pose questions to your general manager, air concerns and maybe even win a prize! The time spent gathering with fellow co-op members adds up to a worthwhile investment of a few hours each year.

Another resolution to consider is evaluating your personal stewardship of electricity. We all can find small or large ways to conserve more energy, increase efficiency and simply waste less. In the market for a new appliance this year? Buy one that is Energy Star-rated. Or make this the year when you commit to weatherizing your house to seal leaks and gaps where air gets through. A fresh start always provides a meaningful opportunity to take stock of our surroundings and goals and make changes accordingly.

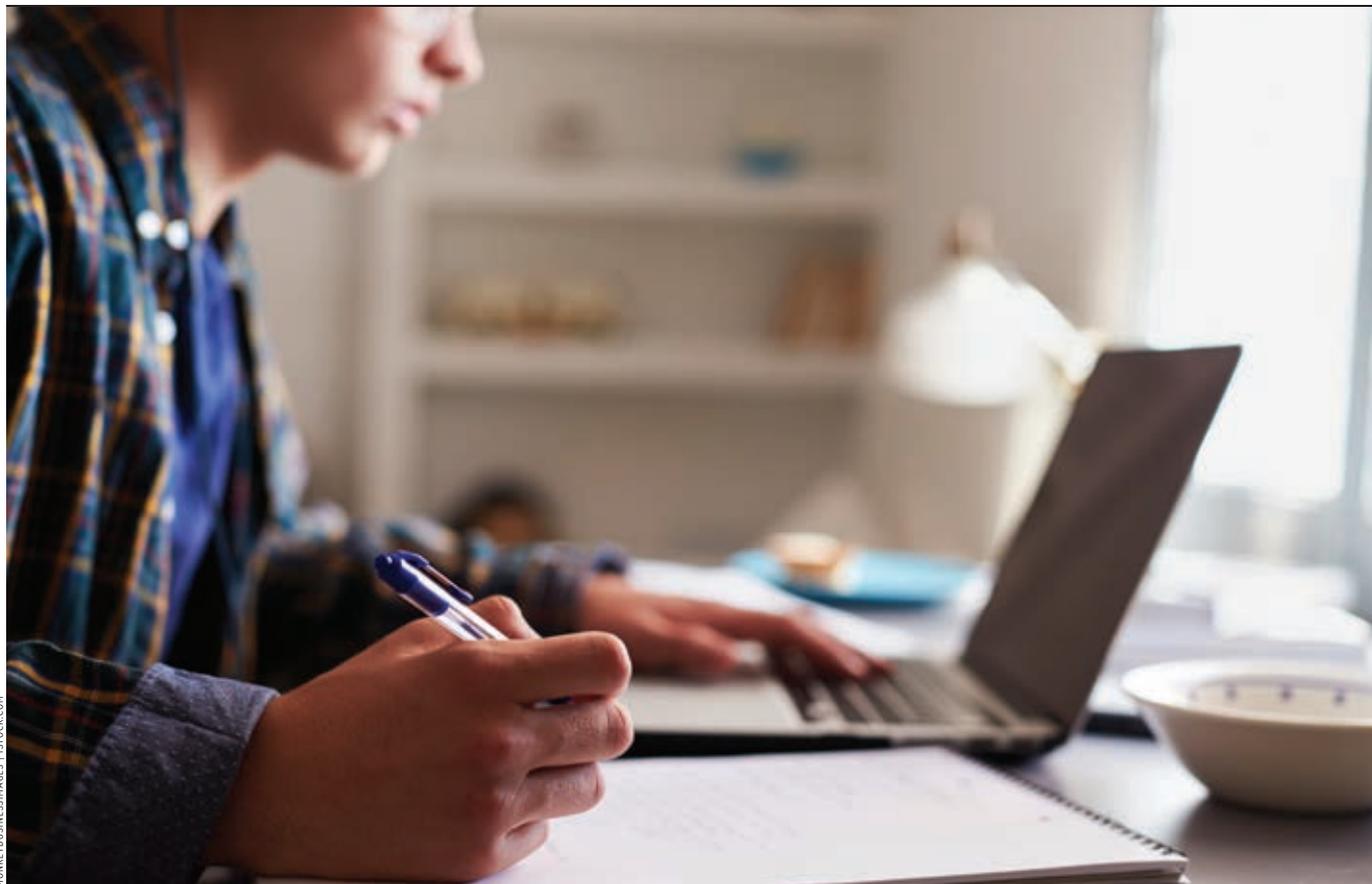
One last resolution to set, in concert with your cooperative, is renewing your commitment to serve our community. Whether by opting in to Operation Round Up if you don't already participate, volunteering individually or donating to whatever organization strikes a chord with you, this is perhaps the most rewarding and beneficial resolution of all.

With thoughtful attention to these resolutions, together we can make this year one of our best yet.



sive and timely customer service, we'd like to redouble our efforts to solicit feedback from our membership. Your comments, questions and concerns are always welcome and often serve as a springboard for new and better services. If we don't get a sense from those we serve of what we're doing right and which areas need improvement, we're neglecting an important tool for positive change.

Another goal we continually work toward is striving to secure sustainable power agreements at competitive rates for the long-term value of Central Texas EC's membership. By keeping an eye on the power market's horizon and emerging



## CTEC To Offer 25 College Scholarships

**TWENTY-FIVE \$1,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS WILL BE AWARDED** in 2019 to youths in Central Texas Electric Cooperative's service area, bringing the total amount of financial help given to area students over the program's 22-year history to \$584,000.

"This is a great opportunity for the co-op to continue doing something to help our membership at really no cost," says CEO Robert A. Loth III. "Using the state's escheated money also assures that at least some of that money comes back into the area and is used for the benefit of our members."

Texas House Bill 3203, passed in 1997, allows nonprofit electric cooperatives to put unclaimed capital credits—previously collected by the Texas comptroller's office for the state's general fund—to use for student scholarships.

### Scholarship Guidelines

A selection committee appointed by the board of directors of Central Texas EC will choose candidates and alternates for the 25 scholarships to be awarded. Scholarships will be awarded based upon the applicant's eligibility and will be granted to students who attend an accredited Texas institution of higher education. Recipients must carry a minimum of 12 hours or be considered by the registrar to be a full-time student. All scholarships will be mailed directly to the financial aid office of the selected school for the fall 2019 semester.

### Eligibility

CTEC accepts scholarship applications from all active members and their immediate families (not just high school students) whose primary residence is served by CTEC. Applicants must be of good character, as evidenced by at least two letters of recommendation from teachers, principals, counselors, etc. at the student's current school. For applicants returning to school after an extended absence, letters of recommendation will be accepted from employers, supervisors, ministers, etc. Applicants must have a coherent degree plan and demonstrate willingness to pursue a course of higher learning.

### How To Apply

For high school seniors, CTEC mails applications and guidelines in early January to schools in CTEC's service territory. For members already out of high school, applications are available at all CTEC offices and also can be downloaded from the co-op's website, [ctec.coop](http://ctec.coop). Questions can be directed to Patricia Stehling in Fredericksburg at 1-800-900-CTEC (2832) or at (830) 997-2126. Successful applicants will be announced in late April.

### Deadline

Completed applications must be in the Fredericksburg CTEC office by 5 p.m. Friday, February 22.

# Smoothing Out Winter Bills

**AS WE TRUDGE THROUGH WHAT CAN BE THE COLDEST AND DREARIEST PART OF** winter, we at Central Texas Electric Cooperative wish to remind our members that the season's chilly temperatures and shortened days frequently lead to increased electricity usage at home, which can cause uncomfortable spikes in electric bills. You can soften the blow by expecting at least a modest increase in power bills compared to bills from the fall, of course, and adjusting your household's monthly budget to make up the difference. But you also can employ a few strategies to smooth out those upcoming bills.

Now that the holiday blitz of parties and gatherings is mostly behind us, elaborate dinners and dishes can take a back seat. Pull out your slow cooker from the back of your pantry and put it to work. Meals made in a slow cooker or pressure

cooker typically use less energy than those cooked in a conventional oven. Plus, hearty stews and braised dishes make the perfect comforting accompaniments to a cold winter's night.

Unplugging chargers that aren't charging anything is another opportunity for significant savings. Once your cell-phone, tablet or other device is fully charged, unplug the charger. Otherwise, it still draws a small but measurable amount of power that adds to your bill at no benefit to you or your electronics.

A final quick tip for hedging against billing peaks: If you don't use a smart thermostat to control your home's heating and air conditioning system, install one. If that's not practical at the moment, make a habit of

decreasing the temperature in your home by around 10 degrees before leaving for work in the morning and before turning in for the night. When the decrease in energy used for heating your home is sustained for eight hours, the savings really can add up.

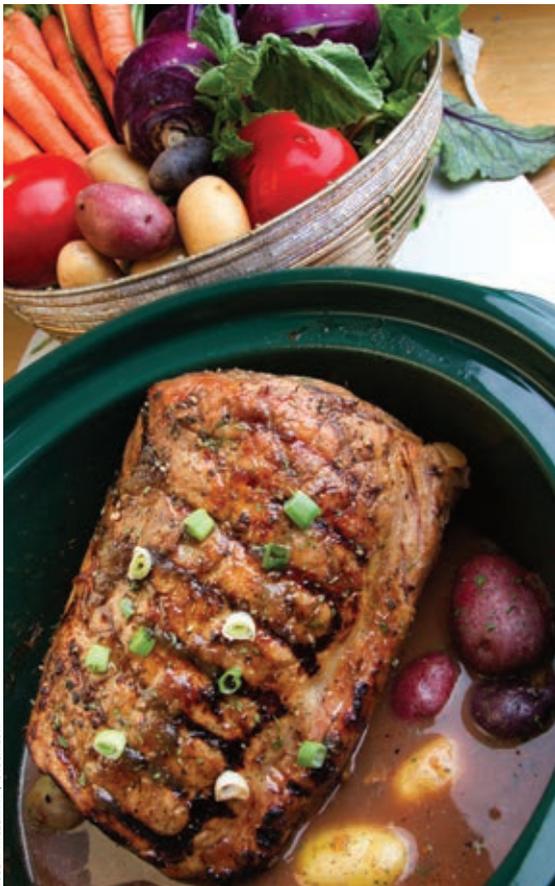
As always, Central Texas EC wants to partner with you in minimizing your energy spending while maximizing the value you derive from it.

## Important Reminder

*Board of directors selection process*

**MEMBERS INTERESTED IN RUNNING FOR** a seat on the co-op's board of directors should pay special attention to a March deadline. Article III of Central Texas Electric Cooperative's bylaws details the director selection process and implements several deadlines.

Note the upcoming deadline: Any person seeking nomination at a district meeting must submit an application and petition signed by at least 10 members in his or her district by March 15. You can obtain an application by contacting the CTEC headquarters office at P.O. Box 553, Fredericksburg 78624 or by calling 1-800-900-CTEC (2832) or (830) 997-2126. Copies of the CTEC bylaws are available at CTEC offices in Fredericksburg, Kingsland, Llano and Mason. You also can find the bylaws online at [ctec.coop](http://ctec.coop) under My Co-op.



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## Happy New Year

Central Texas EC will be closed Tuesday, January 1, in observance of the holiday.



# CTEC Gives High School Students the Chance To Visit Washington

THREE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM CENTRAL TEXAS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S SERVICE area will be selected to participate in the 55th annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour this June 12–21. Through this trip, students gain a personal understanding of American history as well as insight about their roles as U.S. citizens.

In 1957, senator and future president Lyndon Baines Johnson inspired the creation of Youth Tour when he addressed the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting in Chicago.

"If one thing comes out of this meeting, it will be sending youngsters to the national capital where they can actually see what the flag stands for and represents," he said.

Eligible high school students can submit an essay for a chance to win a spot on this trip of a lifetime. The deadline is January 25. Participation is open to students who have completed their sophomore year by the end of the school year.

Youth Tour is a fun-filled trip to the U.S. capital taken by about 150 students and chaperones sponsored by cooperatives across Texas. The fun starts in Austin, where participants will visit the state Capitol and Bullock Texas State History Museum before departing for Washington, D.C.

Stops in the U.S. capital include the National Cathedral, Pentagon City Mall, a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington Cemetery, a performance at the Kennedy Center, Mount Vernon, a Potomac River boat cruise and dance, Smithsonian Institution, FDR Memorial, Jefferson Memorial, Capitol Hill, Supreme Court, Library of Congress, the White House and much more!

All expenses for the three winners of the tour (except those for personal items such as souvenirs) are paid by the co-op, and CTEC provides all transportation.

## Contest Rules

Essays of 500 words or fewer must be submitted to the CTEC headquarters office in Fredericksburg by 5 p.m. Friday, January 25. This year's essay must answer this question: **Should electric linemen be considered first responders?**

Winning essays are selected by independent judges and will be evaluated on originality, knowledge of topic, composition, neatness and grammar. Two alternates also will be named in the event that a winner is unable to attend the tour. Additional information and entry forms are available from your local high school and online at [ctec.coop](http://ctec.coop).



## Central Texas Electric Cooperative

### Fredericksburg (headquarters)

386 Friendship Lane  
Fredericksburg, TX 78624

### Llano

1410 E. State Highway 29, Llano

### Kingsland

Nob Hill Subdivision  
706 Cottonwood St., Kingsland

### Mason

1881 E. State Highway 29, Mason

### Office Hours

8 a.m.–5 p.m., Monday–Friday

### Website

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

### CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Robert A. Loth III

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mark Hahn, President, *Mason County*  
Tim Lehmborg, Vice President, *Gillespie County*  
Doylene Bode, Secretary, *Gillespie County*  
Charles E. Pearson, Treasurer, *Gillespie County*  
Jack Asbill, *Mason County*  
Rex Brand, *Kerr County*  
Tommy Duncan, *Llano County*  
Allen Goodwin, *Kendall County*  
Stanley Keese, *Llano County*  
James Low, *San Saba County*  
W.C. "Dub" Stewart, *Llano County*

## Emergency Contact

To report electric service interruptions, please call the Central Texas Electric Cooperative office in your area at the numbers listed below:

### FREDERICKSBURG AREA

**(830) 997-2126**

**1-800-900-CTEC (2832)**

including Gillespie, Kendall, Kerr, Blanco, Real and Kimble counties

### LLANO AND SAN SABA AREAS

**(325) 247-4191**

### THE LAKES AREA

**(325) 388-4542**

### MASON AREA

**(325) 347-6314**

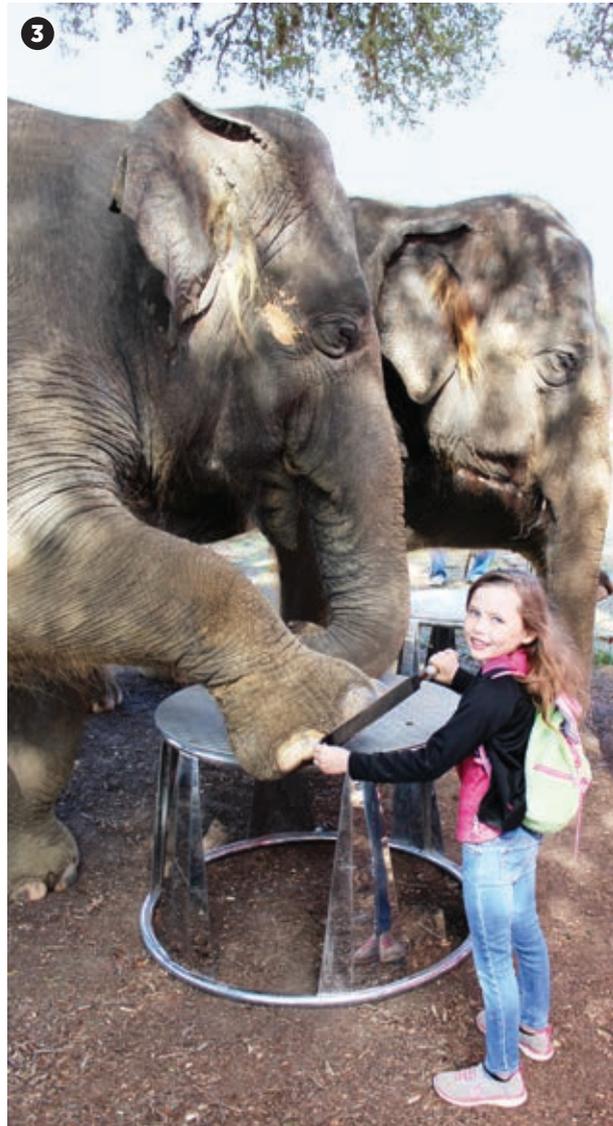
including McCulloch, Menard and Kimble counties

### AFTER HOURS OUTAGE REPORTING

**1-800-900-CTEC (2832)**

# Bringing Elephants and Humans Together

BY PATRICIA STEHLING



## “LOOK TO YOUR RIGHT. ISN'T THAT BEAUTIFUL?”

The crowd giving its attention to Kari Johnson, owner of the Hill Country Elephant Preserve, looks up and sees a line of five elephants, holding on to each other's tails with their trunks, descend a hill toward them. Some spectators giggle with excitement while others stare, wide-eyed and silent—but all are in awe. The elephants continue forward, step after silent step until they arrive in front of the eager audience.

Johnson introduces the elephants—Kitty, Rosie, Tai, Dixie and Becky—and the experience begins as the elephants “wave” to the crowd and sounds of delight fill the air. Trainers and other staff,

including Gary, Johnson's husband and co-owner of the Preserve, seem just as excited as the guests in attendance. The caretakers' pride and passion for these giants is as obvious as their genuine enjoyment from bringing this experience to others.

Johnson was just 14 when she started a full-time apprenticeship with her stepfather, an elephant trainer. Much like Kari, Gary fell in love with elephants at a young age, owning his first elephant at 16. “About the time Gary got his elephant, we came to California to help some people with elephants that they had and helped with their training,” Johnson said. “And where else is Gary going to be but hanging around this famous

You have to capture the behavior; the second they do the tiniest little thing, they get a Skittle or a peppermint. That takes pockets and pockets full of Skittles and peppermints over months to get them to do that one thing.

—Kari Johnson



1. Visitors get to spend time petting the elephants.
2. Teaching tricks requires many treats of Skittles and peppermints.
3. Visitors can file the elephants' toenails.
4. An elephant takes a bow.
5. As the crowd sang *Happy Birthday* to those celebrating with a trip to the Preserve, some of the elephants provided the music.
6. Guests snap photos as elephants come down the hill.
7. Owners Kari and Gary Johnson with their elephants.
8. Many items are available in the gift shop, including elephant art.
9. One of the elephants shows off her artistic skills.
10. Bath time.



elephant guy, and so we met when we were that young and we got married about 10 years later.”

Together, the couple has fashioned a livelihood for more than 45 years through their shared love of elephants.

Last May, the Johnsons and their elephants made their way to the Texas Hill Country and now call a 57-acre ranch outside of Stonewall home. “My family is from Texas, and I just wanted to come home,” Johnson explained. “We have been thrilled with our reception here. The people here are wonderful. We love Texas; we love being here.”

The experience offered at the Preserve is unique and hands-

on. From helping bathe and groom an elephant to opportunities for photos and meaningful interaction, it is a truly remarkable experience.

The Preserve helps support the five elephants and their care and sponsors educational programs that benefit schoolchildren, the mentally and physically challenged, veterinary students, and other groups and organizations.

The Johnsons hope that the unique experience of meeting an elephant will help foster an awareness and connection that translates into advocacy for these animals. Elephant experience times and dates can be found at [visitthepreserve.com](http://visitthepreserve.com).