



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

TREWA Looks Ahead to the 2025 TEC/TREWA Annual Meeting

Here we are once again, just two months away for our TEC/TREWA Annual Meeting. CEO's and Director's will gather in Austin this year.

Situated in the center of Austin you will find us at the Fairmont Austin from August 2- August 6th. Our statewide Cooperative leaders and TREWA directors gather each year to learn more about new and innovative things affecting our co-ops, continuing education sessions for the co-op directors, and the TREWA fundraising event.

Texas Rural Women's Electric Association (TREWA) is very proud to share this time with these leaders each year.



Our mission is to continue to educate and create interest and understanding of the rural electric cooperative systems and issues among the members and public, and to present a unified front for the member-owned electric cooperative as they continue to improve the quality of life in rural Texas.

We are looking forward to the annual membership drive and raising funds for our scholarships, Youth Tour and Rural Friends/ACRE.

TREWA's unique scholarship program offers educational opportunities beyond those traditionally offered to graduating seniors. This scholarship program extends to those continuing their education at various levels. TREWA continues to support our statewide organization in its efforts to provide tools for the annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour program.

We also continue our support of Rural Friends of Electric Cooperatives, a nonpartisan political action committee (PAC) for directors, employees, consumer members and others associated with the electric cooperative serving Texas.

Without the support of our cooperative directors, CEO's, co-op staff and our TREWA members, these efforts would not be possible. We look forward to visiting with those that will be attending the meeting and we are just a click away if you are unable to join us this year.

Your contributions to our Silent Auction and arts and crafts sale are very much appreciated. Please see our form for your submission if you are interested in donating on Page 8.

Thank you for your continued support of the efforts of our/your TREWA organization. We look forward to your renewal of membership or becoming a part of this outstanding organization for the first time.

Rachel Ford
TREWA President



EMPOWERING YOUTH

THE FUTURE IS ELECTRIC

Youth Powering the Co-op Legacy

What do future engineers, linemen, communicators, and board members all have in common? They might just be walking the halls of a local high school in your community right now—and they're already lighting up the future of your electric cooperative.

From leadership programs to scholarships and summer trips that spark lifelong memories, electric cooperatives across Texas are investing in the next generation. Because co-ops don't just deliver power—they empower people.

Youth Tour: The Trip That Changes Everything

Every June, co-ops from across Texas send outstanding high school students to Washington, D.C. for the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour—a whirlwind week of history, leadership, and meeting other students from across the country.

It's not just about monuments and museums (though those are great). It's about inspiring future leaders and helping young people understand the importance of civic engagement, public service, and—yes—electric cooperatives!



TVEC PR Supervisor, Laura Melton & 2024 Youth Tour students in Washington D.C.

Scholarships That Spark Opportunity

Electric cooperatives support local students not only with mentorship and recognition—but also with cold, hard tuition help. Whether they're heading to college, trade school, or a certification program, co-op scholarships are an investment in our communities' brightest minds and most capable hands.

Many co-ops even offer lineworker training scholarships, helping students build hands-on careers that literally keep the lights on.

Youth engagement isn't just nice—it's necessary. Electric co-ops were built on community, and that means looking ahead while honoring the past. Every student who learns about the cooperative model is one more reason to believe our future is in good hands. When students see co-ops not just as service providers, but as stepping stones to careers and community leadership—they see their future take shape.

GOVERNMENT UPDATE

STRONGER TOGETHER

Co-ops and the Power of Participation

In early June, the dust settles after the 89th Regular Session of the Texas Legislature, marking the end of 140 days of legislative activity. While we await the Public Utility Commission's rule adoption, cooperatives will have opportunities to participate in that process. Instead of detailing specific bills, this is a moment to highlight key accomplishments and give credit where it's due.

Hundreds of bills were filed in Austin that could have impacted our members and employees. Fortunately, we have a phenomenal and highly capable team at TEC working tirelessly on our behalf. We owe them our gratitude for their dedication and hard work. Having previously worked on the other side of the equation as staff for a member of the legislature, I know what it takes to be successful.

The entire TEC team deserves commendation—it takes long hours, weekend work, and sometimes a twilight zone mentality to grind through the legislative session. If you haven't already, take a moment to send them a quick note of appreciation!

We should also thank the co-op employees who stepped away from their regular duties to travel to Austin for meetings, provide testimony at hearings, make phone calls, send emails, and have good old-fashioned face-to-face conversations with legislators and staff. The legislative process demands participation from all of us. Not everyone can drop everything to get involved, so sincere thanks go to those who made the time and effort to help during session.

This session launched the Voices of Cooperative Power (VCP) initiative in Texas, significantly impacting outreach efforts. Feedback from legislative offices highlighted the difference made by active engagement. Members are encouraged to utilize VCP in their communications. As rulemaking continues, maintaining energy and enthusiasm is crucial. The cooperative network thrives on collective effort, and the commitment to serving members is evident, especially during legislative and regulatory processes.

Listen to the Trinity Valley Electric Cooperative podcast, [Consider It Hot](#) to hear from Phillip!



Phillip Smith

TVEC Govt. Affairs Coord.

“ *The work doesn't stop when the session ends... our voices, our unity, and our mission matter every step of the way.*

Got a question?

Contact Phillip Smith at smithp@tvec.coop.



Voices for Cooperative Power



A new grassroots advocacy program by NRECA called Voices for Cooperative Power. VCP brings together a network of electric co-op members sharing the needs of their communities with elected officials. This program helps members engage with policymakers and advocate for their energy future.

VCP is a place for those who want to influence policy decisions impacting electric co-ops and their consumer-members. Members come together to communicate this perspective and protect our co-ops' ability to deliver affordable, reliable services.

Speaking up on issues that impact electric co-ops sends a message to elected officials about the needs of our communities – and their constituencies. VCP gives you a platform to talk about the many ways your electric co-op supports your community. Beyond delivering electricity, co-ops provide jobs, stability, and economic growth – all while ensuring that energy affordability and reliability remain foundational advantages of electric co-op membership.

Check out the website voicesforcooperativepower.com for more information and how you can get involved.



Rural friends/ACRE supports legislators who have not only demonstrated an understanding of the unique role electric cooperatives have played in the development of rural communities, but who have also been recognized for their communities to represent the rural interests of electric cooperatives and their members.



For more information on Rural Friends of Electric Cooperatives, or eligibility to participate, please contact Jen Johnston, Government Relations Coordinator, at (512) 486-6221 or jjohnston@texas-ec.org.



BECOME A MEMBER OF RURAL FRIENDS/ACRE

Rural Friends/ACRE was formed with the mission of making the voice of electric co-op consumers heard in the Texas Legislature and U.S. Congress. Rural Friends of Electric Cooperatives is the nonpartisan political action committee that supports candidates seeking election to the Texas Legislature. It operates under a set of bylaws and the policies of a board of directors composed of electric co-op leaders elected from around the state. ACRE - the Action Committee for Rural Electrification - supports candidates for the U.S. Congress. Rural Friends and ACRE are subject to all state and federal campaign finance laws and reporting requirements.

Membership is strictly voluntary and consists of persons who have an interest in preserving and defending our local electric co-ops. Rural Friends/ACRE raises personal, voluntary contributions from supporters who care about our co-ops and the communities we serve.

Contributions go to candidates for state and federal office who have demonstrated support for electric co-op goals, who share co-op values and who want electric co-ops to be successful. Support is based on voting records on legislation affecting electric co-ops, statements on co-op issues, and historical stances on those issues.

Joining is Easy. Simply fill out and mail the form below along with your check to add your voice to those electric co-op leaders who are "making a difference" for electric co-ops in Austin and Washington, D. C.

Rural Friends/ACRE Membership Form

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Home Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Cooperative: _____ E-mail address: _____

I am a cooperative: Director Manager Employee Attorney Other _____

Are you a member of an electric cooperative? Yes No

Select yearly membership: \$25 \$50 \$100 Century Club \$150 Century Club Plus \$500 President's Club

Enclosed are my membership dues in the amount of \$ _____.

Please payroll deduct my dues. (If offered by your cooperative.)

Please add my dues to my monthly electric bill. (If offered by your cooperative.)

Signature

Date

Contributions to Rural Friends of Electric Cooperatives (Rural Friends) and the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) are not tax deductible. Contributions to Rural Friends and ACRE are voluntary and will be used for political purposes. You have the right to refuse to contribute without reprisal. Any contribution guidelines presented are merely suggestions. You are free to contribute more or less than the suggested amounts, or not at all. No one will be favored or disadvantaged by reason of the amount contributed or a decision not to contribute.

Please remit to: Rural Friends, 1122 Colorado St., 24th Floor, Austin, TX 78701.

COOPERATIVE HISTORY

THEN VS. NOW

The \$5 Membership That Powered a Movement

In the late 1930s, a small yet impactful initiative illuminated rural Texas... quite literally. For just \$5, families could join an electric cooperative. This one-time fee provided them with access to a resource that many urban residents already enjoyed: dependable electricity.

Today, \$5 might not seem like much, but back then, it was a real investment. Adjusted for inflation, that's about \$112 in 2025 dollars, a meaningful commitment from families who believed in a better future powered by community.



Leigh Denney
TVEC Media &
Content Specialist

That small membership fee didn't just bring electric lines to homes. It sparked progress, independence, and opportunity.

It meant:

- Electric lights instead of kerosene lamps
- Refrigerators instead of iceboxes
- Water pumps replacing hand-drawn buckets
- And the start of a member-owned model that still exists today

Nearly 90 years later, that same cooperative spirit lives on. While the tools have changed, smart meters, outage apps, and energy efficiency programs—the mission remains the same: bringing power to the people, not profit to shareholders.

And that original \$5? It's a symbol of what happens when communities come together, invest in themselves, and build something lasting.

Photo Credit: Texas Electric Cooperatives

Whether you've been a member for decades or just joined this year, you're part of something historic, and something hopeful. As we look to the future with advanced technology and new challenges, we carry the legacy of those first \$5 pioneers with us.

Because co-ops don't just power homes. They empower communities.

COOPERATIVE HISTORY

SUMMER SAFETY IS COOL

Summer Electrical Tips You'll Actually Remember

1. Don't Overload Your Outlets

We get it—you've got fans, chargers, mini-fridges, and fairy lights for your backyard party. But plugging too many gadgets into one outlet can cause overheating and even fires.

2. Water and Electricity Don't Mix

Whether it's pool parties, sprinklers, or washing the dog—keep electrical cords, outlets, and devices far from water.



3. Extension Cords Aren't Roommates

They're temporary guests—not long-term solutions. Running extension cords under rugs or across rooms creates trip hazards and fire risks.

4. Watch Out For Those... Tree Limbs

Summertime storms and tall Texas trees don't always play nice with power lines.

5. Pets and Plugs Don't Mix

Puppies and curious cats love to chew—especially cords. That can be a shocking mistake.



Texas Street Corn Salad

4 cups frozen corn, charred
1/3 cup mayonnaise
1/4 cup sour cream
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
Juice of 1 lime

1/2 teaspoon chili powder
1/4 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
Salt and pepper to taste
Optional: diced jalapeño

Char the corn: Heat a large skillet over high heat. Add corn (no oil!) and stir occasionally until lightly charred—about 5–7 minutes.

Mix it up: In a large bowl, whisk together mayo, sour cream, lime juice, chili powder, paprika, salt, and pepper.

Combine: Add the corn to the dressing and toss to coat. Stir in cheese and cilantro.

Chill & serve: Let it sit for at least 10–15 minutes in the fridge to soak up the flavor. Serve cold or at room temp.

Co-op Tip: Add grilled chicken or shrimp for an easy main dish, or scoop it up with tortilla chips for a party dip!





TEC/TREWA Annual Meeting

SILENT AUCTION & CRAFT DONATION FORM



YES! I will donate a craft/art item!

Name

City, State, Zip

DID YOU
KNOW?

Your donated items will help provide funds for TREWA scholarships and donations to Rural Friends/ACRE.

Item Donated

Item Value

Designated Person Bringing Item to Meeting:



Stay tuned for more details about the Annual Meeting!

Texas Electric Cooperatives
Your Touchstone Energy Partner



To send a craft item or make a donation to TREWA, please mail to:

Bobbi Byford, Trinity Valley EC
P.O. Box 888, Kaufman, TX 75142

thanks
for your
support

You can also give your craft or silent auction item to any TREWA Board Member.

2025 TREWA Board of Directors

Group 1

Dana Massey

Arts & Crafts

Sam Houston EC
(936) 328-1279



Group 2

Kendra Markwardt

Vice-President/
Scholarship Chair
HILCO EC
(254) 687-2331
Ext. 1145 • kmarkwardt@hilco.coop



Group 3

Malony Bartush

Board Member
Pentex Energy
(940) 759-2211
malony.bartush@pentex.com



Group 4

Rachel Ford

President
Comanche EC
(325) 356-2533
rford@ceca.coop



Group 5

Suzie Brown

Board Member
Bailey County EC
(806) 272-4504
sbrown@bcecoop.com



Group 6

Dawn Southwell

Secretary/Treasurer
Pedernales EC Inc.
(830) 868-6142
Dawn.Southwell@peci.com



Group 7

Dorina Villarreal

Board Member
Nueces EC
(361)767-7337
dvillarreal@nueceselectric.org



Group 3

Karen Culpepper

Past President
Wise EC
(940) 626-3003
kculpepper@wiseec.com



Bobbi Byford

Communications
Trinity Valley EC
(469) 261-9876
bobbi@tvec.coop



Laura Melton

Communications
Trinity Valley EC
(469) 344-1836
meltonl@tvec.coop



“

A woman is like a tea bag—you can't tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water.

Eleanor Roosevelt

”

TREWA MEMBERSHIP

**Current memberships expire
July 31, 2026.**

TREWA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Memberships are valid August 1 through July 31.

Membership: Renewal New Member

Membership Fees:

Please check the appropriate dues assessments:

\$10 (1 year) \$20 (2 years)

First Name _____

Last Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Cooperative Name _____

Please spell out

Relationship to Cooperative:

Employee Director Member
 Spouse of Employee Spouse of Director
 Other _____

Return to:

Mail: TREWA Membership
TEC Lockbox
P.O. Box 201338
Dallas, TX 75320



Email: knejtek@tex-ec.org



The TREWA Board of Directors thanks you for your continued support of this organization.

TREWA membership is open to men and women of rural electric cooperatives. We encourage you to become a part of our growing organization as we continue to light the lamp of knowledge for the future.

Membership has its privileges. The children of TREWA members are eligible to apply for scholarships sponsored by TREWA. Members also receive an edition of The Lamplighter, which is sent twice a year via email.

Regular membership price is \$10 per year and, to date, we have almost 1,000 members. Once again, TREWA is offering membership at \$5 per person to cooperatives that enroll 100 percent of their directors, directors' spouses and employees (or spouse of an employee).

Renew your membership today by completing and returning the paper form or online TREWA membership forms are also available at trewa.org.

LET'S CELEBRATE

Let's Be Aware

June

Country Cooking Month
Camping Month
Home Safety Month
Dairy Month
ROW Professionals Week - 9-15
Daylight Appreciation Day - 21

July

Grilling Month
Picnic Month
Smart Irrigation Month
Cow Appreciation Day - 8
Hire a Veteran Day - 25

August

Back to School Month
Family Fun Month
Wellness Month
Safe Digging Day - 11
World Photography Day - 19

Reminders

First Day of Summer - June 20
Remind kids about electrical safety
Check fans - Spin Counterclockwise
TREWA auction items due in August

Upcoming Holidays

Father's Day - June 15
Juneteenth - June 19
Independence Day - July 4
Non-Profit Day - 17
Senior Citizens Day - 21

Watt's So Funny?

How do electric co-op ladies from Texas keep their cool in the summer?

Smart thermostats, iced tea, and a whole lot of shade (both literal and metaphorical).

