Members All Smiles Despite Wet Weather at Annual Meeting

**STEADY RAINFALL SHOWERED MEMBERS** May 30 as they arrived for Navarro County Electric Cooperative’s annual meeting at Navarro College Dawson Auditorium. Despite the wet weather, folks were all smiles as co-op employees carrying umbrellas eagerly accompanied members to the auditorium entrance. Once inside, members registered for door prizes, were offered refreshments and each received a Navarro County EC goody bag before taking a seat in the auditorium.

The meeting was called to order by Board President Ron Buckley, who called on NCEC employee Jeff Davis to give the invocation. Buckley then welcomed all those in attendance and thanked them for braving the rain to be there. After introducing the board of directors seated onstage and recognizing special guests, Buckley turned the meeting over to Philip Segrest, attorney for the cooperative, to conduct the business session of the meeting.

The first order of business was to determine a quorum, and Segrest said that 152 members were present, which surpassed the minimum requirement of 75. The notice of the annual meeting, as well as the verification of the meeting notice in Texas Co-op Power, was recognized. Then Segrest offered to read the minutes from the 2014 annual meeting but entertained motions to dispense with the reading of those minutes. After receiving a motion and a second from the floor, Segrest called for any discussion. There was no discussion, so Segrest took a vote, asking all those in favor to say, “Aye,” to which the room responded overwhelmingly in approval to dispense with the reading of the minutes.

**NCEC Audit Approved**

Secretary Treasurer George Smith gave the treasurer’s report and stated that after a complete audit, Certified Public
Accountant Elaine Hanks found no discrepancies in the cooperative’s financial accounts, books or financial condition. “By far the largest expense to the co-op was power we purchased from Brazos Electric Cooperative, our wholesale power supplier, which cost over $40,789,000,” Smith said. “The co-op collected $52,576,444 from the sale of electricity and $767,757 in miscellaneous revenue. That gave us a total revenue of $53,344,201.”

The operating margin was reported as 6.85 percent, which left 16.69 percent for depreciation, interest, operations and maintenance, and administration after paying for purchased power. Smith said the cooperative was operated on a little more than 16 cents out of every dollar collected from the members.

“We’ve been blessed with really good management over the last 20 years. They do a tremendous job, and even more so all the men and women who go out every day in some unbelievably bad weather to keep the lights on at any time, night or day,” Smith continued. “Most of all, I’d like to thank the members. Without you all, we wouldn’t have a co-op. Everyone who works here knows that, and we do our best to remember that. We appreciate you being here, and God bless.”

Six Years Without Lost Time
General Manager Billy Jones gave the manager’s report and touched on additional financial details. “We had sales of just over 594 million kilowatt-hours, which was a little less than last year but still a healthy number,” Jones said. He said that the cooperative ended 2014 with 2,940 miles of distribution line and total assets of $87 million. “Probably the most important thing was that we were able to pay back to the members almost $1.6 million in capital credits.”

Jones congratulated NCEC employees on reaching a landmark length of time without a lost-time accident or injury, and he encouraged everyone to keep up the good work. “I appreciate the effort of the employees, and they’ve made it now to six years without a lost-time accident or injury,” Jones said. This drew an immediate and hearty round of applause from the members.

Employees Greg Fisher and Jerad Taylor received Life-saving Awards from Texas Electric Cooperatives for their actions in 2014, and Jones recognized them during the meeting. “Greg Fisher and Jerad Taylor were driving along Farm Road 813 between Rocket and Waxahachie when they came upon a car that was upside down in the ditch. They were able to use the winch and boom on their bucket truck to lift the car, free a lady who was pinned under the car, and render first aid until help arrived.

“We’d like to congratulate Greg and Jerad and all the co-op employees on these very special awards,” Jones said. He then thanked the members for their patience and
understanding during April and May. “We’ve had an unusually stormy spring and numerous outages, some of which were really long and systemwide,” he said. “Your co-op crews and office employees have worked extremely hard and put in a lot of long days and nights. I appreciate their efforts, and I know you do, also.”

Concern for the Community

Based upon one of the Seven Cooperative Principles, “Concern for Community,” Navarro County Electric Cooperative donates to schools and sports programs across its five-county service area. Jones said that two of the programs the co-op administers for the membership have done well and should make members proud. Since its inception in 2009, Operation Round Up has reaped a little more than $453,000 through the end of 2014. The program has paid out 192 grants to organizations in the co-op service area, totaling more than $412,000.

The scholarship program has been around longer than a decade at NCEC, and Jones thanked the scholarship committee for their diligent work. “This year we had 70 eligible applicants, and the board was able to approve eight $6,000 scholarships,” Jones said. The winners were: Kelly Williams and Cody Carroll of Blooming Grove High School; Rebecca Bowles of Bishop T.K. Gorman Regional Catholic High School; Taner Tunstall of Elkhart High School; Makinsey Nehib of Palmer High School; Frank Robles of Rice High School; Lindsey Fautt of Wortham High School; and Morgan Cook, who attends Tarleton State University.

Jones concluded by expressing his gratitude at being so fortunate to guide the operations of Navarro County EC for the past 11 years. “I say this every year, but I think it’s important to guide the operations of Navarro County EC for the past 11 years. “I say this every year, but I think it’s important to thank the membership, especially those of you who attend the annual meetings, and to publicly thank the board of directors for their cooperation and support.”

Buckley and Smith Re-elected

Segrest returned to the podium to conduct the election of directors. He announced that Ron Buckley was nominated as the director for District 2 by a nominating committee, and that there were no petitions received for further nominations.
Segrest then took a vote from the membership by asking all in favor to say, “Aye.” The membership responded affirmatively, with no opposition recorded. Segrest then congratulated Buckley on his re-election. Likewise for District 6, George Smith was nominated by committee, with no petitions submitted. Segrest again recorded an affirmative vote from the membership for the position, and then congratulated Smith on his re-election.

There being no further business to discuss, Segrest then turned proceedings back over to Buckley to adjourn the meeting and begin awarding door prizes.

**Door Prizes Always a Hit**

Jeff Davis returned with the help of NCEC employee Mark Rash to begin the drawings for door prizes. Electronics, tools, housewares, kitchen appliances, electric bill credits and more were awarded. Two 40-inch flat-screen televisions were awarded as the grand prizes.

John Drain won the first grand prize, and LaDonna Harrison won the second grand prize. Karen Johnson from Wortham won a Dremel tool. “I’ve been a co-op member for over 20 years, and this is the first time I’ve won a door prize,” she said.

Once all the door prizes were awarded, members discovered that the clouds that had brought rain earlier that morning were giving way to a clearing sky for their drive home.