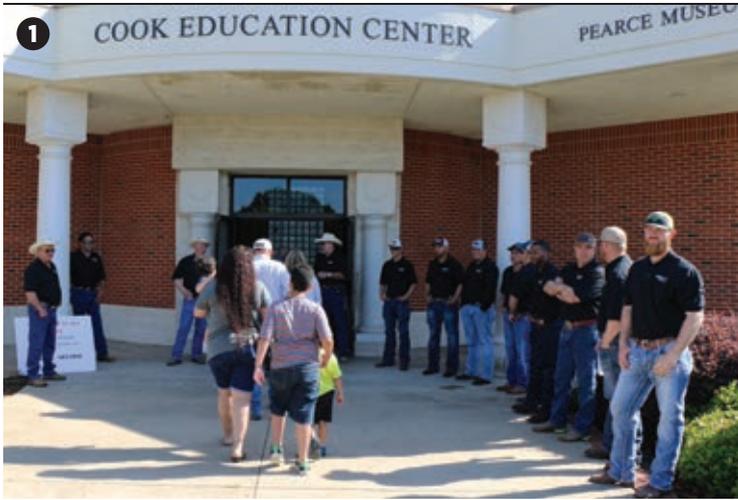


NAVARRO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



Business, Gratitude on Display at NCEC Annual Meeting

THERE ARE MANY REASONS NAVARRO COUNTY ELECTRIC COOP-erative members are drawn to the co-op’s annual meeting year after year. Some show up for the door prizes. Others come to hear the business of their cooperative. And many attend simply to catch up with old friends and make new ones. For first-time attendees like Kenneth Smallwood, it’s an opportunity to see the cooperative community in action.

“I just wanted to see what it’s all about. I’ve never come before,” said Smallwood, a recently retired postal carrier of 30 years. Though he’s been a Navarro County EC member since 1999, his Saturday delivery shift in the Kerens and Richland Chambers Lake areas consistently conflicted with the annual meeting. “I always wanted to come,” he said, “but I wasn’t going to take a day off for it.”

Now that he’s retired, Smallwood was able to join more than 130 other members May 5 for this year’s meeting at Navarro College’s Cook Center in Corsicana. He took a seat at the back

of the hall and waited for business to commence.

Meanwhile, other members continued to arrive, strolling into the sunlit foyer of the Cook Center to register and collect attendance gifts. Shortly before 10 a.m., NCEC Board President Ron Buckley called the meeting to order and introduced co-op attorney Philip Segrest, who oversaw the business portion of the meeting.

Segrest called George Smith, the board’s secretary-treasurer, to the stage to provide the financial report. Smith recited the co-op’s 2017 financials, which included more than \$41 million in revenue.

“Of course, our greatest expense was the cost of electric power,” he said. “The co-op purchased \$29,642,268 of power from Brazos Electric.” Brazos Electric Power Cooperative is the generation and transmission co-op that produces the power that NCEC distributes to its members.

“When you add all the costs of operations, maintenance,



1. Employees greet members as they arrive at the annual meeting.
2. Jeff Davis says a prayer before the annual meeting begins.
3. Milton N. Peterson wins a Ryobi blower.
4. Maria Hernandez gives out gift bags before the meeting.
5. Navarro County EC employees Charlotte Weaver and Mark Rash welcome a member at the registration table.
6. Scholarship winners, from left, Taner Tunstall, Corbin Donoho, Sterling Gentry, Elysa Mendoza and Caleb Ashford
7. From left, co-op attorney Philip Segrest, General Manager Billy Jones, and directors Ron Buckley, Leonard Mixon, Kent Sheffield, Van Fowler, Bill Southard and George Smith



consumer accounting, administration, depreciation and interest, it comes to a total of \$39,537,109 in total expenses, which leaves the co-op with operating margins of \$1,761,890,” Smith said. “Therefore, the co-op was operated on a little over 24 cents out of every dollar taken from the members.”

As is the case every year at the annual meeting, gratitude was the theme of the day. And Smith kicked off a succession of thank-you’s by recognizing General Manager Billy Jones and the rest of the NCEC staff for maintaining a healthy cooperative and keeping the power flowing reliably. He gave a special shoutout to the lineworkers for their dedication. “They’re really the heart of the co-op,” he said. “We really appreciate them for going out in all kinds of conditions.”

Of course, the thanksgiving wouldn’t be complete without acknowledgment of the members present. “I appreciate all you folks being here,” Smith said, “because without y’all, we wouldn’t be here. We make a great effort to remember that.”

After all, it is the member-owners of Navarro County EC who hold democratic control over policy- and decision-making at the cooperative. At this year’s meeting, members exercised that democratic control by re-electing Buckley, District 2, and Smith, District 6, to additional three-year terms on the board

of directors.

Each year, Jones provides members with a report on the state of the cooperative. But before commencing with this year’s report, he gave tribute to Alfred Martin, a board member of nearly 22 years who passed away the previous Sunday at age 94.

“We will miss his knowledge and wisdom as well as his wry sense of humor,” Jones said. “When he took a position, he never backed down, and we always knew where he stood on issues. He will be missed.”

The remainder of the report was good news. Citing Smith’s financial report, Jones said the co-op “enjoyed slow but steady growth for 2017, and at year-end, we had 16,243 meters, 2,987 miles of line and \$93 million in assets.”

Jones reminded the attendees that Navarro County EC turned 80 years old in November 2017 and noted some of the changes since it was organized in 1937. The co-op’s first headquarters, at 214 N. Main St. in Corsicana, now houses the country music radio station Ranch 106.9, he said, and the offices the co-op built in 1951 are now occupied by an oil company. In 1975, NCEC moved into its current location on W. Highway 22, and in 2007, the co-op expanded that facility by 3,000 square feet.



- 1. Member Martha Mendoza wins a Skilsaw.**
- 2. Navarro County EC member James Marcum wins an ONN mini stereo system.**
- 3. Employees Shafter Henley and Larry Harrison help member Amanda Barrera with the 40-inch Samsung UHD TV she won in the door prize drawings.**
- 4. Member Brenda Parrish wins a Shop-Vac.**



Of all the changes that have occurred over the decades, one stood out to Jones. NCEC’s first loan from the Rural Electrification Administration was for \$100,000 at an interest rate of 2.88 percent. In 2011, the co-op took out a loan with the Federal Financing Bank for \$15.8 million with an average interest rate of just 2.58 percent. “I would have never thought that interest would be lower on loans nearly 80 years later,” he said.

2017 marked the 13th consecutive year Navarro County EC was able to return capital credits to its members. “One of the benefits of being a cooperative member is that when the cooperative is financially able, it can pay capital credits to its members, and the members receive a bill credit or a check in the mail, even if they are no longer a member,” Jones said. In 2017, the co-op returned \$944,581 in capital credits. As a result, current members saw credits applied to their November electric bills.

Jones went on to celebrate another recurrent achievement: For the ninth year in a row, NCEC employees reported no lost-time accidents or injuries. “Once again, I want to acknowledge the efforts of the employees and the support of the board for our safety program,” he said. “The employees continue to demonstrate a real commitment to safety.”

While Navarro County EC is committed to providing affordable and reliable electric service—and when it can, returning profits—to its members, the co-op’s mission extends beyond that of the average utility company. NCEC also works to improve the communities it serves, all in dedication to Con-

cern for Community, one of the seven guiding principles of the cooperative business model. Among the co-op’s community-building efforts are Operation Round-Up and its scholarship program.

Since its inception in 2009, Operation Round-Up has provided \$647,496 in grants to community organizations in the co-op’s service territory, Jones said. The funds come from members who voluntarily “round up” their electric bills every month to the next whole dollar.

This year, 52 students applied for scholarships through the cooperative, Jones said, and the six winners who were awarded the \$6,000 scholarships were recognized at the meeting: Caleb Ashford, Mason Burleson, Corbin Donoho, Sterling Gentry, Elysa Mendoza and Taner Tunstall.

Of course, students weren’t the only winners of the morning. Dozens of members went home with door prizes that included power tools, gift cards, cash and kitchen appliances. One lucky member even won a 40-inch ultrahigh-definition TV.

As he wrapped up his yearly report, Jones took a moment to express his gratitude to everyone who makes the cooperative function.

“I’ll take this opportunity to thank the membership, especially those of you who showed up today for participating in the annual meeting, and the board members for their cooperation and support,” he said. “We can’t do it without the cooperation of the board.”

In Remembrance of Alfred L. Martin

ALFRED LEWIS MARTIN WAS BORN SEPTEMBER 15, 1923, IN PELHAM, NAVARRO COUNTY, to Lewis and Holly Caruthers Martin. After finishing his formal education, Martin transferred to active military duty August 23, 1943. He trained at Kearns, Utah, assigned to the 3rd Army then reassigned to the Army Air Force with the 2143rd Base Unit in Tuskegee, Alabama. He served as an Air Force mechanic for the Tuskegee Airmen and as a troubleshooter and flight chief for radio communications in advanced training. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal, Medal for Outstanding Soldier in the 3rd Army in Europe and the Victory Medal.

Martin was assigned to training school for replacements to the black combat units, pursuit squadron. On February 22, 1946, he was honorably discharged as a first sergeant.

After moving to California, Martin purchased and operated a gas station. He returned home to Pelham and was a farmer and rancher for more than 60 years. He served on various agriculture committees and boards, including the Texas Seed and Grain Committee. He loved Pelham and served as the chairman of the Pelham Community Association for many years. He was instrumental in getting land donated to the Pelham Cemetery.

Martin was named Farmer of the Year in 1984 by the Corsicana Rotary Club. He served as vice president of Texas Cotton Program and led the Navarro Pest Management Association.

Martin was elected to the Navarro County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors in May 1996 and served nearly 22 years until his passing April 29, 2018. We will miss his knowledge and wisdom as well as his wry sense of humor. When he took a position, he never backed down, and we always knew where he stood on issues.

He will be missed.



Navarro County Electric Cooperative

3800 W. Highway 22 • P.O. Box 616
Corsicana, TX 75151

*Operating in Ellis, Freestone, Hill,
Limestone and Navarro counties*

GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

Billy P. Jones

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ron L. Buckley, President, District 2
Kent Sheffield, Vice President, District 1
George Smith, Secretary-Treasurer, District 6
Van Fowler, District 7
Vacant, District 5
Leonard L. Mixon, District 3
Bill Southard, District 4



Contact Us

*For information during office hours
and outages after hours*

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navarroec.com

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

CONVENIENT WAYS TO PAY YOUR BILL

navarroec.com

smarthubapp.com

1-855-385-9975 to pay by phone

We no longer take payments over the
phone at the office.



Happy Independence Day

Our offices will be closed Wednesday, July 4, in observance of the holiday.