

# Wrapped in Value



**MESSAGE FROM  
GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO DEBRA COLE**

**I DON'T THINK THERE IS** a more exciting time of year than the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Although the holiday season is full of excitement, we sometimes miss the magic as we juggle hefty shopping lists and parties, and wrapping up work projects before the end of the year.

These tasks can add stress—not joy—to the holiday season. However, those of us at HILCO Electric Cooperative want you to think of your electric co-op as an early holiday gift wrapped with several layers of value.

As a member and owner of HILCO EC, you receive several money-saving perks that come in handy at this time of year. Did you know you can save at local and national businesses with your Co-op Connections card, simply for being a member of HILCO EC? You might even find coupons for the top-secret ingredients of your famous green bean casserole at [connections.coop](http://connections.coop). So before you do your holiday shopping or baking, see what kinds of deals are waiting for you.

Expecting a lot of family visits over the holidays? Every kilowatt-hour saved counts! Our energy-efficiency experts offer tips and advice on how to manage your electricity use. We also can suggest more efficient holiday lighting options.



Too busy to stop by our office? You don't need to take time out of your packed holiday schedule to visit one of our offices to pay your bill. Instead, pay with SmartHub, our free mobile app, or over the phone.

But the best co-op value of all can be seen in the faces of your friends and neighbors who work at HILCO EC. You can find us volunteering at local veterans dinners, toy drives, Salvation Army and other charities around the service area.

Folks in the areas we serve created your electric co-op 79 years ago to power our community and empower members to improve their quality of life. That's our purpose. It warms my heart to see staff going the extra mile to power our community and make life a bit better for everyone during the holidays.

Avoid getting caught in the hustle and bustle of the season. Take a moment to watch the excitement in the eyes of your children and grandchildren as they count down the days. Enjoy every last piece of fudge.

Then, after gifts are wrapped and meals cooked, take time to look into the faces of those around your table: They are your purpose. The rest of the holiday scramble is just details, and we can help you take care of a few of those. Merry Christmas!



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Joseph Tedesco, President, *District 4*
- Bill Allen, Vice President, *District 5*
- Janet Smith, Secretary-Treasurer, *District 7*
- Leroy Huff, *District 1*
- Margaret Hill, *District 2*
- George Thiess, *District 6*
- Ron Roberts, *District 3*

Operating in Dallas, Ellis, Hill, Johnson and McLennan counties

**GENERAL MANAGER AND CEO**

Debra A. Cole

**COOPERATIVE OFFICES**

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1-800-338-6425

**Midlothian**

300A Silken Crossing  
Midlothian, TX 76065  
(972) 723-2900

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4581 FM 933  
Whitney, TX 76692  
(254) 694-5237  
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**CONTACT US**

For information during office hours and outages after hours:

**CALL US**

**(254) 687-2331** local or  
**1-800-338-6425** toll-free

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**[hilco@hilco.coop](mailto:hilco@hilco.coop)**

**FIND US ON THE WEB**

**[hilco.coop](http://hilco.coop)**

# Grand Opening!

Join us for refreshments and visit the new building  
Wednesday, December 7, at our satellite office in Elm Mott

Located at 298 S. Conally Dr.  
Exit 343 to FM 308 Service Road on the west side of I-35

Office Hours: Monday–Friday 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and 2:00–4:30 p.m.;  
closed for lunch 1:00–2:00 p.m.



## MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM YOUR HILCO BOARD OF DIRECTORS



The HILCO Board of Directors are, from left, back row: Joe Tedesco, Ron Roberts, Leroy Huff, Bill Allen, George Thiess; and front row: Margaret Hill, Jan Smith and Attorney Martha McGregor.

## December Bulletin

### December 2–4, 9–11

**Waxahachie**  
Bethlehem Revisited  
402 College St.

### December 3–4

**Hillsboro**  
Tour of Homes  
\$15 tickets at hillsborochamber.org

### December 3–4

**Waxahachie**  
Candlelight Home Tour  
2–8 p.m., contact Waxahachie Chamber of Commerce

## Happy Holidays

from HILCO EC

Our offices will be closed  
Friday, December 23,  
Monday, December 26, and  
Monday, January 2, in  
observance of the holidays.



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## BILLING SCHEDULE

Payments are due by close of business at  
5 p.m. on the due date.

### CYCLE 1

Billing Date ..... December 6  
Due Date ..... December 22

### CYCLE 2

Billing Date ..... December 13  
Due Date ..... December 29

### CYCLE 3

Billing Date ..... December 20  
Due Date ..... January 5

### CYCLE 13

Billing Date ..... December 21  
Due Date ..... January 5

### CYCLE 4

Billing Date ..... December 27  
Due Date ..... January 12



# HILCO EC Brings Community Together at Annual Meeting

**PAT SETTLEMAYER SAID IT WAS ABOUT 49 YEARS AGO** when she attended her first HILCO picnic, held on the football field in Itasca.

“I was the winner of a Crock-Pot at one of the early annual meetings in Itasca,” she said.

She shared how she loves the opportunity to win great prizes but said that the prizes and dinner are an added bonus and not the only reason she attends the meetings. Settlemeyer loves to come and see familiar faces from around the community and catch up with neighbors and friends.

As the doors opened around 5:30 p.m. on September 29, Settlemeyer and more than 650 other members began packing into the Waxahachie Civic Center for the Northern Member Picnic and Annual Meeting. Members were greeted by HILCO employees and treated to Michna’s Bar-B-Que while being entertained by Gary Fox and the Fox Country Band.

Laughter and fun filled the room before business began as General Manager/CEO Debra Cole took the stage to welcome members and entertain guests with a humorous story. Cole

introduced members to HILCO’s board of directors then handed the mic over to Board President Joe Tedesco to follow up on business and programs. Board member Ron Roberts led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Once business was out of the way, Assistant General Manager of Administration Paula Farquhar conducted the drawing for more than 26 great prizes, including a 49-inch flat-screen TV won by a lucky member.

A huge thank you goes to HILCO US for donating two 50-gallon propane prizes; our contractor T&D for a donation of the child’s scooter and helmet; and Schneider Engineering for donating a \$100 Walmart gift card.

These events are hosted each year by the HILCO EC Board of Directors, along with staff and employees, to show their appreciation to the members of HILCO.

Congratulations to all of our lucky prize winners. Thank you to each and every member who voted in our 2016 director election. Each vote counts and is an important part of our cooperative business model. Hope to see you all next year!

# HILCO Members Re-Elect Directors



**Ron Roberts**  
District 3



**Margaret Hill**  
District 2

**THE MEMBERSHIP OF HILCO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE VOTED** to re-elect District 2 and District 3 members for three-year terms to the board of directors. The election results were announced at the annual business meeting held September 29 at the Waxahachie Civic Center.

Ron Roberts of Whitney ran unopposed and was re-elected to serve his third term representing District 3. Margaret Hill of Midlothian, who also ran unopposed, was re-elected to serve her seventh term representing District 2.

Roberts and Hill serve on the board along with Joe Tedesco, District 4, Midlothian; George Thiess, District 6, Hillsboro; Bill Allen, District 5, Whitney; Jan Smith, District 7, Hubbard; and Leroy Huff, District 1, Midlothian.

After the business meeting, the directors elected officers for the 2016–17 year. Tedesco will serve as president of the board of directors; Bill Allen will serve as vice president; and Jan Smith will serve as secretary-treasurer. 107900000

“We appreciate Mrs. Hill’s and Mr. Roberts’ willingness to devote their time and energies to the board, representing members in their districts,” HILCO General Manager/CEO Debra Cole said. “We appreciate all of the board members’ assuming these immense responsibilities on behalf of our membership. We thank them for their many long hours they devote to the cooperative every month and for their dedication and loyalty to the members of the cooperative.”

All members of the HILCO Board of Directors are required to earn the Credentialed Cooperative Director certification through the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. They are required to act in good faith and make fair and sound business decisions. The ultimate decisions of each board member must always be based on the best interests of the cooperative’s members.

## RECIPE OF THE MONTH



SARMSIS | ISTOCK.COM

## German Potato Bake

- 4 cups cubed, hot, cooked potatoes
- ½ pound processed cheese, cubed, divided use
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 5 crisply cooked bacon slices, crumbled, divided use
- ¼ cup chopped green onions, divided use
- ¾ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup sour cream
- 1 jar (2 ounces) chopped pimientos, drained
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- ¼ teaspoon paprika

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a large saucepan, combine potatoes, half the cheese and butter. Stir over low heat until cheese is melted.
3. Add 2 tablespoons bacon, 2 tablespoons green onions, mayonnaise, sour cream, pimientos and pepper. Mix well.
4. Spoon into 1½-quart casserole dish. Top with remaining cheese, bacon and onions. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake 20–25 minutes or until heated through.

Find this and more delicious recipes online at  
**TEXASCOOPPOWER.COM**



OUR ENTIRE ORGANIZATION WISHES YOU A

*Merry Christmas*

AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR

*from your friends at*

HILCO ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

# THE TRIP OF A LIFETIME



GOVERNMENT-IN-ACTION

# YOUTH TOUR

JUNE 7-16, 2017



**You're a Texas high school junior or senior. You're smart; you have big dreams.** Maybe you've never been out of the state, and maybe you've never flown on a plane, but you want to travel—experience a big city, visit historic landmarks and meet people. **Sound like you? Then the Government-in-Action Youth Tour is your tour.**

Essay and application deadline is January 6, 2017. Visit [hilco.coop](http://hilco.coop) for contest rules and to download the application. Sponsored by HILCO Electric Cooperative.



Start your adventure at [TexasYouthTour.com](http://TexasYouthTour.com)  
Visit [Facebook.com/TexasYouthTourAlumni](https://www.facebook.com/TexasYouthTourAlumni)  
Scan the QR code to watch a Youth Tour video





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Keep lights and ladders clear of power lines when decorating outside.

## Illuminate Your Holiday Season Safely

**DON'T LET THE BRIGHT AND COLORFUL SPARKLE** of the season distract you from taking the precautions that you need to stay safe when decorating. HILCO Electric Cooperative provides tips for safe holiday decorating.

If you are decorating with an artificial tree, make sure you choose one with fire-resistant protection. With a real tree, make sure that the needles are green and sturdy, and the trunk is sticky with resin. These are indicators that your tree is well-hydrated. Keep your tree stand filled with water so that the tree does not become overly dry and present a fire hazard.

Never place your tree near heat-emitting devices, such as space heaters or radiators, which can be fire hazards. The National Fire Protection Association reports an annual average of 210 home fires caused as a result of Christmas tree mishaps.

Any lights that are hung either inside or outside of the home should have a label indicating that they have been certified by an accredited independent testing laboratory. The Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 1,300 people are treated for injuries involving holiday lights each year.

Also make sure the lights are rated for the location where they will be used—whether indoors or outside. Before hanging your lights, check the strands for broken bulbs, as well as fraying or bare wires that could present electrical hazards. Always replace damaged products.

Typically, one extension cord should have only three strands of lights connected to it at most, but you should also check that the extension cord is rated for its intended use. Never run extension cords under carpets, through doorways or where they could be damaged by furniture.

When decorating outside, always be sure to look up and double-check that you and any equipment, such as a ladder or a light strand, are at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines.

When securing light strands, never staple or nail them into place, as this could damage them. Outdoor lights and decorations should be plugged into an outlet with ground-fault circuit interrupter protection.

Be sure to turn off all lights before leaving home or going to sleep. A timer can help you do this.

## Safely Operate Your Portable Generator

**WHEN YOU'VE LOST POWER**, a portable generator can provide electricity to keep your home warm and power appliances. However, used improperly, a generator can present serious hazards.

Before using a generator, read the instructions and specifications. It should have more capacity than the combined wattage of the electronics you will plug into it. Make sure nothing is plugged into the generator when turning it on.

Never connect a portable generator directly to home wiring. This can result in potentially deadly backfeed, when electricity gets fed back through the electrical system and meter into power lines, creating a hazard to lineworkers and others near downed lines.

Never use a portable generator indoors. Carbon monoxide emissions can be deadly. Operate the generator outside in an open but protected space from which fumes can dissipate harmlessly.

Install a carbon monoxide detector, and be on the lookout for the signs of carbon monoxide poisoning. Symptoms include dizziness, nausea, headaches and lethargy. If you or someone else is showing these symptoms, move into fresh air and seek medical attention.

Run your generator once a month for 10 minutes to ensure that it is running properly and will be ready if you need it.

**Keep your family safe this season by using generators according to the instructions.**



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Parents Eggs  
 TVs Santa St.  
 Chimney Chestnut  
 Binder Scarf Mitten  
 Candy cane North Pole  
 Stocking Star Snow  
 Socks Clothes Movie  
 Games Hot Choco  
 Dolls Bicycles C  
 Petite Sno  
 Wreath Garlands Frosty  
 Scarf Mittens Jingle bells Family Frie  
 Candy cane North Pole Morning Red su  
 Star Snowman Snow angels Icicle T  
 Movies Jewelry Jackets G  
 Stockings Ornar  
 Computers Cameras  
 Mike Jack Frost Chir  
 Controllers Frosty Rudolp  
 Family Friends Loved c  
 Morning Red Fireplace  
 Snow angels Icicle Gifts Present  
 Jewelry Jackets Mats Video Gam  
 Socks Ornar Dog Cookies D  
 Cameras Nick Yul  
 ...

Sugar and spice and  
 everything nice.  
 For less.

This holiday season, let HILCO Electric Cooperative's Co-op Connections card help you save on everything from the tree to the trimmings to the gifts underneath.



Find all the ways to save at  
**hilco.coop**

## Win a \$50 Bill Credit!

As you're reading your *Texas Co-op Power*, look for the "hidden" account number in the local HILCO pages in the center of the magazine. If it's YOUR electric account number, call us before the end of December—you have won a \$50 credit on your HILCO electric bill!



**(254) 687-2331**

or

**1-800-338-6425**



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## Power Tip

Electric bills increase during the winter for a variety of reasons: holiday gatherings, houseguests, and shorter days and longer nights. Small measures such as turning down your thermostat, replacing incandescent bulbs with light-emitting diodes and washing clothes in cold water can help control energy costs.