Co-ops Support Volunteer Firefighters in Shared Mission

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT/GENERAL MANAGER BILLY MARRICLE

WE’RE PROUD OF OUR FIRST RESPONDERS here at San Bernard Electric Cooperative. I’m talking about our lineworkers, who charge into potentially deadly storms to restore power.

We also appreciate another special group of first responders who make our communities better by providing critical emergency services: volunteer firefighters.

Most small communities across the state are served by volunteer fire departments, staffed by civilians who undergo special training so they can fight fires, respond to vehicular collisions and tend to medical emergencies. Some 65% of the more than 1 million firefighters in the United States are volunteers, according to the National Fire Protection Association. And 95% of volunteer firefighters work in departments that protect fewer than 25,000 people each, which describes many of the communities in Co-op Country.

Needless to say, these firefighters bolster the well-being of our members, and they do so only with the support of the community. Most VFDs are nonprofits with budgets that typically don’t benefit from tax dollars, so they rely on grants, donations and community fundraising. The VFD fish fries, barbecues and raffles you hear about are largely their only means to raise money to purchase new equipment.

October is National Cooperative Month, when we celebrate the many ways co-ops serve our communities in addition to providing safe and reliable electricity. Indeed, electric cooperatives, following the cooperative principle of Concern for Community, often work behind the scenes to help fire departments thrive. Read Putting Others First on Page 12 to learn more about the close connection between co-ops and VFDs.

We’re proud that we’ve provided electricity to our part of the state for more than 75 years and of the many ways we have improved quality of life in our communities. Volunteer fire departments in this country go back even further in history.

The first VFD was established by Benjamin Franklin in 1736 in Philadelphia. He also helped prove that lightning—a cause of many fires in colonial America—and electricity were the same phenomenon. Franklin thought the lightning rod, which deflects lightning away from buildings to prevent fires, to be his greatest invention.

As we celebrate National Cooperative Month, we also salute volunteer firefighters. Their dedication and selflessness make our communities safer. We’re glad to be able to contribute to their success.

Until next time, take care.

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Until next time, take care.
We are proud to power your life.

SAFE, RELIABLE, AFFORDABLE ENERGY.

THEN. NOW. ALWAYS.

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL CO-OP MONTH

San Bernard Electric Co-op

San Bernard Electric Cooperative

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Contact Us

Headquarters—Bellville
(979) 865-3171
1-800-364-3171
309 W. Main St. • P.O. Box 1208
Bellville 77418

Columbus Service Center
(979) 732-8346
4285 Highway 71 S. • P.O. Box 309
Columbus 78934

Fieldstore Service Center
(936) 372-9176 or
(936) 372-9177
29244 FM 1488 • P.O. Box 1367
Magnolia 77353

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Hallettsville 77964

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facebook.com/sbcecoop
FALL IS THE AIR, AND THAT MEANS COOLER WEATHER FOR outdoor activities—and pumpkins! The Oil Ranch in Hockley is your one-stop shop for family activities this fall and all year long.

Covering more than 50 acres, Oil Ranch is one of the largest amusement parks in the area and offers a wide array of family-friendly outdoor entertainment, including train rides, pony rides, a dairy barn and miniature golf.

“One thing most people notice is how quiet it is,” said Lynn Brunson, Oil Ranch president. “No matter where you are on 56 acres, even on a crowded day, it is peaceful. You are not crowded on a 10-acre plot but have room to run around and play.”

When visitors arrive at Oil Ranch, they pay a single admission fee that covers all attractions at the park. They then have the freedom to explore and enjoy all the activities in any order they want. The ranch is well staffed by friendly employees who can provide directions around the property, are trained to answer any questions about the plants and animals of the park, and work hard to ensure the safety of all visitors.

One of the Oil Ranch’s main attractions is the train, which traverses the entire park, allowing visitors a peek of all the activities on offer. The train passes by working windmills, barns and ponds that are fully stocked for catch and release fishing.

The ponies also attract a lot of attention.

“The pony rides are unique because [they] are hand-led pony rides and not on a walker like most other places,” Brunson said. Kids also enjoy the hayride, she added, where they’re able to feed “cow candy” to the ranch’s cows.

Other great family activities at Oil Ranch include a petting zoo, mechanical horse roping, hamster wheels, miniature golf, paintball, a swimming pool and an “Indian village” with tepees for kids to play in.

Oil Ranch is a working ranch with live chickens, cattle, a dairy cow, horses, goats and more. The ranch is filled with animals at every stage of life, from chicks just hatched from their eggs to full-grown roosters strutting around.

“We give many children an experience like they can’t get anywhere else,” Brunson said. “They get a real feel for what
ranching and farming life is like.”

Oil Ranch is a great destination for school field trips, birthday parties, corporate events, reunions and other events. Its hours of operation change throughout the year, but it’s open to the public seven days a week throughout October, which is also when the Scarecrow Festival and Pumpkin Patch gets underway. A tradition for more than 20 years, the annual festival features thousands of pumpkins and more than 85 life-size scarecrows.

“Our scarecrows are set up in scenes throughout the ranch,” Brunson explained. “You may have a dad scarecrow pitching to a child scarecrow in one scene or a family of scarecrows picking the garden.”

Children under 12 receive a free minipumpkin with admission in the month of October. Additional pumpkins are available for purchase.

“Family is very important to me,” said Brunson, who attributes the success of the ranch to its focus on bringing families together. “My sons, daughter-in-law and grandchildren come in and help us get ready for holiday events. There are many people who want to make lots of money, but we try to make things affordable and give our customers a great family experience.”

For more information about Oil Ranch, visit oilranch.com or the park’s Facebook page at facebook.com/texasoilranch.

Rules To Stay Safe at Work and Play

FORTUNATELY, NOT EVERYONE’S JOB IS as dangerous as an electric lineworker’s, but all jobs present risks of accidents and injuries—as do many of our leisure activities. Do your part to stay safe—at work and play—by keeping these rules in mind.

▲ All accidents are preventable.
▲ Do not take shortcuts.
▲ If you are not trained to do it, don’t do it.
▲ Use the right tools and equipment, and use them in the right way.
▲ Assess the risks before you begin a task.
▲ Never wear loose clothes or footwear that lacks grip.
▲ Practice good housekeeping.
▲ Wear appropriate personal protective equipment.
When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible.

Here’s what’s going on if you find yourself in the dark.

1. **High-Voltage Transmission Lines**
   Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

2. **Distribution Substation**
   Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation or the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.

3. **Main Distribution Lines**
   If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.

4. **Tap Lines**
   If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools and homes.

5. **Individual Homes**
   If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.
FOR SALE

BULL CALVES AND FARM EQUIPMENT—
Two registered Angus bull calves, 11 and 9 months old, R jet black (AI) and watchout genetics. Spreader and seeder for three-point hookup, very good condition, $400. 6 hp Troy-Bilt tiller, works. Call (936) 581-3115.

ROTARY CUTTER—BB60, 5 ft., $495. Call (979) 732-3889.

CENTRAL AIR CONDITIONER UNITS—5-ton and 2.5-ton furnace and evaporator for inside, condensing unit for outside, electric for 2.5. Call (979) 451-2098.

VERMEER ROUND BALER—Sx5, works well, $1,200 OBO. Call home phone at (979) 732-2110 or cellphone at (979) 732-1722.


TOOLS AND TRAILER—Rigid 12-24 threader, conduit benders, ladders, vises, bandsaws and drills. Call (361) 798-2408, (361) 798-6283 or (361) 798-6284.

WELDING MACHINE—Lincoln Electric Classic II 350 amp diesel, 1,285 hours, $8,000 OBO. Call (979) 234-3783.

2008 E-Z-GO TXT GOLF CART—Power drive system, electric, two-seater w/rear flip seat, portable windshield and 36 V charger, batteries 2 years old, $3,000. Call (979) 885-7344.

HEIFERS—Top-quality heifers and young cows. Call (979) 865-3804.

VARIOUS HOUSEHOLD ITEMS—Admiral gas clothes dryer, $75; GE dishwasher, $50; bedside cabinet, $15; Danielle Steele collection of 66 novels, $350; Stinger insect killer, new, $15; Detecto scale, new, $12; Tomcat mole trap, $5. Call (979) 733-9816.

VARIOUS ITEMS—Electric hospital bed $130; New Home sewing machine, model 921 with table; exercise bike, $30; king-size bed wood headboard, $25. Call (713) 503-4902.

DEER STAND—Steel two-piece deer stand tower, porch in front of stand, stand pulls up with cable and winch (included), $250 OBO. Call (979) 877-8985.

WINDOW FRAMES—17 wooden window frames, all in good condition, fit window size 52.5 inches by 32 inches. Call (281) 468-6921.

LAND—25 acres, Johnson grass meadow in Mill Creek bottom. Call (979) 357-9816.

VARIOUS OFFICE ITEMS—Secretary chairs, $35 each; 4-drawer lateral file cabinet, $99; 5-drawer lateral file cabinet, $129; magnifying light desktop, new, $95; Columbus area. Call (979) 733-9816.

VARIOUS MEDICAL ITEMS—Large wheelchairs, 28” for $250 and 30” for $300 (both have detachable arms and footrests); handicap bar, $10; trapeze bar, $75; Columbus area. Call (979) 733-9816.

POND MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES—Two water pumps, UV light holder, skimmer and large biofilter for pond. Call (361) 550-1661.

VARIOUS ITEMS—Lyfe Tyme barbecue pit with fire box, 40” by 16”; 1984 6-hp Troy-Bilt tiller. Make offer, moving. Call (936) 581-3115.

WOOD HEATER—32” by 44” wood doghouse. 16” scroll saw. Call (979) 357-4801.

WANTED

DOUBLE-WIDE MOBILE HOME—Small to medium square footage, will move. Call (979) 877-7257.

ELECTRIC PEA SHELLER—Call (713) 724-5090.

TRACTOR PTO-DRIVEN CEMENT MIXER—Call (979) 865-8820.

LAND PLANE—6-ft.-wide land plane with three-point hitch, adjustable scarifiers and angled grading blades adjustable for depth, pitch and blade wear. Call (979) 865-8820.

SERVICES

FREE WILD HOG REMOVAL—Use dogs, experienced, will travel. Call (832) 715-1130.

ADVERTISE IN THE TRADING POST

SBEC members are invited to submit ads for the Trading Post to P.O. Box 1208, Bellville, TX 77418 or lsamford@sbec.org. However, no commercial business ads will be accepted. Ads are placed on a first-come, first-served basis, and we reserve the right to refuse any ad. Please submit your ad by the 20th of each month. (If you submit an ad by October 20, it will appear in the December issue.) Your ad will be published in two consecutive issues, then deleted. If you want the ad to run another two months, you must resubmit the ad. The ad will not exceed four consecutive months.