



In a 'golden' moment, Phil and Jacquelyn Sadler enjoy time with their grandchildren, (left to right) Jack, Sofia and Ford.

Formula *for* Success

The Alba-Golden High School senior class of 1965 produced a lively crop of 16 graduates—nine girls and seven boys. Among them was Phil Sadler, who started the next phase of his life by enrolling in Tyler Junior College where he aimed to gain perspective and determine a career path. After two years and a direction chosen, he was admitted to Texas A&M University to study chemical engineering.

With a degree earned, Sadler landed a job in Longview at what was then known as the Eastman Kodak Company (now Eastman Chemical). Initially, the company focused on the core business of producing chemicals for the photography market; then it branched out to develop ways to sell the byproducts of those chemicals to industrial customers. Today, these chemicals and their byproducts are used in the manufacturing of such diverse products as automobile interiors and parts, paints, food preservatives, adhesives, furni-

ture, cosmetics, pharmaceutical products, plastics, inks and other products.

As a newbie at Eastman Kodak, Sadler's first few years were spent in the research and development department. As his career progressed, he was transferred to the production side. It was about this time that he also was introduced to Jacquelyn Owens, a graduate of Stephen F. Austin State University and a student teacher in Longview. About a year later, wedding bells rang for the pair. After another year in Longview, Jacquelyn's hometown, Sadler received an offer to join the oil boom with a job near Wichita Falls.

Sadler said 1974 was an exciting and hectic time in the industry when oil had gone from \$5 a barrel to \$30. His job was to help manage drilling operations, which was virtually a 24-hour-a-day-seven-day-a-week task, while Jacquelyn was managing the home front and their growing family.

During that time, Sadler said he slept with a radio and telephone by his side and was awakened at all hours to address the myriad of problems that needed to be solved. He remembers that Christmas was the only day he could take off. Also, looking back, he said, "I'd go to work before the kids got up and be home after they went to sleep. I knew it was time to do something different."

During that same time, Sadler's mother, Marguerite, had suddenly passed away from a heart condition. Simultaneously, his dad Cletys, who was getting up in years, had also begun to lose interest in his ranching business. So, after consulting with Jacquelyn, Sadler decided it was time to move back to East Texas. They found a house in Golden that was ideally suited for them and their three children, Owen, Olivia and Grant.

Sadler started his own ranching operation with some of his dad's cattle and quickly built the herd to about 300 head with the help of a loan from the U.S. Small Business Administration. And, when he wasn't repairing miles of fence or baling tons of hay, he turned his attention to not only increasing his herd but improving the quality.

Today, his operation consists of about 700 head of cattle with about 75 percent of them a mix of Brahman and Hereford-Brafords. The cows are mated with Angus sires. Sadler says this method produces a good terminal cross-feeder calf that he's pleased with. After years of hard work and experimentation, Sadler's an admired and respected rancher in the cattle industry, and he has a little bit to say on the subject if you ask him.

"It's not the most financially rewarding activity, and you are at the mercy of the weather and the market influences," he says. "You can only control your own efforts, but not those of the external nature. Anybody that would do this has to have a passion for it."

In talking about his own success, he says, "I made it a point to be involved in extension and other agricultural groups that appreciate what we do and that want to improve the land and the activities associated with cattle raising." In addition to staying active in industry associations, Sadler also has always relied on lessons he learned at his father's knee, and he wants to pass these things on to his children and grandchildren.

He said he was taught as a child about land and farming and ranching, and his daddy said to always, "Leave it better than you found it. Don't expect it to give and give and give without your giving something back." And, Sadler says, he has grown to recognize that "It's the same thing with life. You have to be involved."

He also recites other simple rules of thumb like, "Being prepared, doing your best, getting there on time." He said his dad taught him all of those things, "By doing it. And, staying longer and working harder and by doing whatever it took."

Practicing what he preaches, Sadler has always been involved in the community and with various organizations. He was a school board member, involved with Build East

Texas, the Texas Agricultural Lifetime Leadership program, the Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas, the Northeast Texas Beef Improvement Organization, local extension groups and with 4-H activities.

Of East Texas and Golden, Sadler says, "This is one of the only places I thought I could teach my kids the same thing." He believes that as children grow, they become part of what they experience and who they meet; and if you give them a good example while they are growing up, they'll be successful. It sure seems that formula has worked for him and Jacquelyn. Their children have come full circle, working hard to build their own lives. And now, Sadler is working with his youngest son, Grant, who has partnered with his dad to try a turn at ranching, too. When not ranching, the Sadlers' lives remain full, with three beautiful grandchildren just down the county road: Sofia, 4 years old, and twins Jack and Ford, 5.

Sadler has also taken up another activity that combines his love of agriculture and chemistry. Several years ago, his brother David Sadler, a cardiologist in Longview, came across a fledgling company that needed working capital to make a go of it. Sadler and his brother became investors in that Florida company now called Natural Citrus Products (NCP), which has developed a way to produce usable byproducts from citrus waste.

Before, large volumes of citrus biomass from the food industry were being discarded with harmful environmental impacts. NCP has found a way to separate the sugars and oils from the solid mass and then dry the solids. The company's ability to make household products and food-grade products out of that waste ultimately provides an eco-friendly solution along with a saleable product. In addition to household cleaners and absorbents, an extremely healthful food product has emerged. The pomace is used to make a citrus flour with a wide range of uses in the food and beverage industry. What's more, the end product is more than 82 percent fiber, is gluten-free, low in sugar and high in vitamins A and C. It also contains a higher antioxidant rating than almost all naturally produced fruits and vegetables.

This citrus flour can be used for all types of food purposes and adds healthful benefits. It can be used as a thickening agent in soups and sauces, or as an additive to increase bread yield, or for the noble purpose of adding healthful properties. It took several years for the start-up company to begin to see progress, but Sadler has been a believer from the beginning. Serving as a company board member, he revels in telling how the company has grown from its starting point to producing a first order of 6 million pounds of flour, trademarked as Citrifiber.

With increasing trends toward the use of antioxidants, which some believe might help prevent cardiovascular disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease, Sadler and his brother see phenomenal potential for Citrifiber. And in the meantime, transforming a potential pollutant into an agent for health is just one more manifestation of Sadler's quest to "leave it better than you found it."

SCHOOL IS IN

Electric cooperatives in Texas are a close-knit group, so whenever possible, they join forces to take part in classes and training exercises that instill the best practices in all aspects of business, from accounting to member services to safety and construction. These training efforts ensure that knowledgeable employees are using the safest and most up-to-date techniques to provide service, and they also help standardize industry practices.



In the background (left to right), WCEC's Billy Rushing and Lance Shirley oversee troubleshooting techniques employed by the apprentice linemen who attended the underground school. WCEC's Brant Green, standing, was one of the students.

When it's time to train, our statewide organization, Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC), takes the lead in developing the curriculum and promoting classes to all TEC member cooperatives. And many of the cooperatives provide industry experts to assume instructor roles. For 2009, there are more than 100 classes being taught under TEC's direction, and many of the students will earn certifi-

cates or college credits. Of particular note are the training classes for linemen and apprentice linemen.

How do you think those linemen know how to safely climb a power pole? Well, there's a class designed just for that purpose. There are also classes for a dozen other skill sets that involve meters, regulators, capacitors, rigging, working on hotlines and installation of underground cable. Many times, these

classes provide the first hands-on experience that an apprentice lineman will receive in some techniques; the classes are in-depth, and some last several days.

To make the classes as affordable as possible, the schools are held at suitable training grounds—often at an electric cooperative. Wood County Electric Cooperative has such a facility that's dedicated solely to the hands-on training in the operation of underground electrical systems. It's here where students learn the safest and most effective ways to build and troubleshoot underground installations. And they learn from the very best.

While the curriculum is developed by TEC, the hands-on training is overseen by experienced linemen who have been recognized in their field for displaying superior skills and excellence in operations. For a recent underground school, two of WCEC's own provided the oversight needed to

properly train a new crop of Texas linemen. WCEC construction foreman Lance Shirley, with more than 16 years of experience, and journeyman lineman Billy Rushing, with more than 18 years of experience, acted as leads to ensure student knowledge, thoroughness and respect for the proper processes. Students from five other cooperatives were in attendance, and the class also included WCEC linemen apprentices Brant Green, Chance Holland and Daniel Williams.

WCEC has hosted the underground school and a pole-climbing school for four years. And other WCEC employees have served as instructors, including Bradly Martin and Wesley Price. All of the programs are rigorous, and it's imperative that proper steps are followed, with an emphasis on safe practices. Upon completion of a class, linemen receive a certificate that counts as credit toward becoming a Certified Electric Power Lineman

Associate and completing Certified Degree programs. The energy sector is a dynamic field with technological advances regularly emerging. To optimize work efforts in an ever-changing field, the linemen at WCEC put forth the effort and are undoubtedly recognized as among the best trained—and some of the best trainers—in the state and the industry.

According to recent statistics and job projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and other organizations, the lineman's job will continue to be at the forefront of national interest—especially with the new emphasis on developing efficiencies in our nation's electricity infrastructure during a time of increased consumer demand. A lineman's career holds many challenges, and the men who do it and do it well display a work ethic and dedication that not many trades can match. WCEC linemen fit that description.



Chance Holland, seated, operated the boring machine, which is used during underground electrical construction, while others looked on.