



THE EAGLE

By Alfred Lord Tennyson

*He clasps the crag with crooked hands;
Close to the sun in lonely lands,
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.*

Content in the Shadow of Eagles

Debe Goodner's lucky photograph of a bald eagle taking flight captures the nobility of one of America's most iconic and revered symbols of freedom and might.

Avid anglers both, Debe and Jack Goodner had strict criteria for a retirement home that included some world-class fishing opportunities and a more temperate climate than what they experienced at their Springfield, Missouri, home. After much research, the couple zeroed in on Lake Fork and knew East Texas was the place for their property hunt. After quite a bit of research, they stumbled across a beautifully wooded 10-acre tract in Quitman, about a 15-minute drive from their Lake Fork desire.

Their new property came with a boathouse on the 100-acre private Lake Lydia that's stocked with crappie and bass and is home to many creatures, including otter, ducks, beaver, cormorants, nutria, bobcats, hogs and deer among countless others. This lake has also become a migratory home for the occasional flock of pelicans, hummingbirds and many other species of birds, including one of the most majestic—the bald eagle.

Of the eagles, Debe reports that they show up around December, and all of the lake residents are on the lookout for them. But, even when actively searching for them, she says, "They are hard to discern, because we also have many vultures," which might be confused with them. Of her sighting, she said she and Jack were out in their boat, and, "We were fairly close to the shoreline, and one came from the trees and flew right over us. And then, a second one came from the same stand of trees." Of the encounter Jack says, "It's rare to see them, and you have to be lucky to see them. Many people have lived here for years and not seen them."

Doubly lucky for the Goodners, that day they had gone to the lake prepared with a camera, and Debe said when she saw the eagles, she just started snapping as many pictures as she could. Debe said of her experience, "When you see an eagle in flight, it just gives you a chill." Whether flying or perched, these creatures command respect, and they also seem to bring out a little bit of patriotism in all of us. In fact, Jack adds, "We are fairly patriotic, so maybe we look for those things."

Fairly patriotic, indeed. Jack's very proud of his father's military service. As a young man, his dad served in the Navy and later enlisted in the Army during World War II and served in both the European and Pacific theaters as a combat engineer. Jack was actually born at Camp Swift in Bastrop while his father was stationed there. And Jack served in the Texas National Guard himself. Debe says that one of the things she admired about Jack when she first met him was that he would always go out of his way, in public, to thank military members for their service. Who knows, but it may have been that spirit that sparked three of his four children to join the military.

Of his sons, Jack says, "I'm very pro-military, but I did not try to encourage my kids to join the military. But, I do think it was a great career choice. I have always had a very big appreciation for the service, so I was very proud when my kids made the decision." Ross, Jack's second-born, serves in the U.S. Army and is now on his third tour in Iraq. He's currently stationed at Baghdad's Camp Victory. Identifi-

cal twins Tony and Lee both currently serve in the U.S. Navy, with Lee also having done a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps. Tony is a submariner, and Lee is currently attached to an air squadron in Camp Al Asad, Iraq.

The Goodners say that with technology, they get to interact with the kids more frequently than in the past. And they say that like any parents, they worry about each of the kids, whether they are here in the United States, serving in the Middle East or other distant locales. In Jack's words, the ability to communicate with them helps make their service "a lot easier to tolerate." But Jack also brings up another great point.

Jack and Debe both believe that not only do we owe a debt of gratitude to each sailor, airman, soldier and Marine—past and present—but to all of their family members as well. Jack said this sentiment really came to him when he and Debe attended an Army welcoming-home ceremony at Fort Hood to see Ross come back from an Iraq tour. He described the scene with alacrity—a gymnasium packed with parents, grandparents, children and wives—each on pins and needles. There were hours of waiting before the soldiers, who were delayed, arrived, and at each noise or change of light, hundreds of breaths stilled and



Debe and Jack Goodner relax on the shore in front of their Lake Lydia boat-house, which, not surprisingly, flies Old Glory. The Goodners are members of Wood County Electric Cooperative.

heads turned in expectation, just waiting for their own soldier to burst through the door. Filled with emotion, Jack sums up his story with a quiet thought: "Those may be the real heroes. The ones that stay behind."

But, Jack still can't say enough about our service members, and he points out another reality of military life, "It's a job. It's a paycheck. But, it is a COMMITMENT. The very fact that people keep volunteering and want to do their part, that says a great deal about our country." And Debe underscores that by saying, "We thank all of the men and women of our armed services for allowing us to have our lives as they are, and for our freedoms."

In having their lives as they are, the Goodners are so grateful to spend a good part of just about every day on or around Lake Lydia, which has enchanted them so. And, they sheepishly admit to not as yet having gone boating on Lake Fork. But even so, it's fitting that one of our most recognizable national symbols, a living reminder of strength, courage and freedom, chose to show itself to Debe and Jack. Because in meeting them, it's apparent that they are both naturalists and patriots, and in both regards it is very clear that they are proud, grateful and content to bask in the shadow of an eagle.

Bald Eagle Fast Facts

Female eagles are larger than males, and their wingspan can reach 8 feet.

Eagles can fly at speeds of up to 40 mph, and their dives can reach 100 mph.

The birds feed mostly on fish, but they also eat carrion, a variety of waterfowl, other birds, small animals and turtles when available.

Eagle pairs mate for life.

The creation of reservoirs and the outlawing of DDT has helped improve the once precarious status of the bald eagle from endangered to threatened. On June 28, 2007, the U.S. Department of the Interior took the American bald eagle off the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants.

February is the best time for bald eagle sightings in East Texas, and good spots include public lakes such as Tawakoni and Fork.

Participate! It's Your Cooperative

In 2008, for the first time ever, WCEC members voted for WCEC directors via mail-in ballots. This change to the voting process in the bylaws was made to encourage more member participation. In the past, the vote was taken live at the meeting. The board of directors, recognizing that it's not easy for some members to attend the meeting because of distance, work or other obligations, decided to incorporate mail-in ballots to ensure the process is as inclusive as possible.

The process calls for an elections committee, which is made up of

will be listed on the ballot.

To vote, like last year members should simply mark their choices and mail the postage-paid ballot to the independent auditing firm. Members are asked not to drop off ballots at the cooperative as the mailing address is for the firm that will tabulate the votes. Any ballots dropped off at the cooperative are subject to delay and could possibly miss the deadline to be counted.

We know many of our members are extremely busy, so to encourage all to take the time to vote, all returned bal-

2009 WCEC ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

DISTRICT 1

GLENN E. MORRIS
268 FM 900E
Mount Vernon, TX 75457

DISTRICT 2

MIKE GILES
690 PR 8571
Winnsboro, TX 75494

DISTRICT 3

CLARENCE MEISKE
1547 FM 2659
Hawkins, TX 75765

DISTRICT 4

CAROLYN BRYANT
201 East Oak
Yantis, TX 75497

DISTRICT 5

BEVERLY WADDLETON
P.O. Box 996
Quitman, TX 75783

DISTRICT 6

JUDY PEOPLES
1646 VZCR 1222
Grand Saline, TX 75140

DISTRICT 7

WILLIE CICERO
1010 State Hwy. 64
Ben Wheeler, TX 75754

members from each district. Those members prepare and post at the cooperative a list of eligible nominations for director to coincide with the districts up for election. This year, Districts 1 and 4 will be voted upon. In addition to the election committee's selection, any 100 or more members may make a nomination by official petition, not less than 60 days prior to the annual meeting. Official petition forms are available at the cooperative. The elections committee will make the nominations, and qualified candidates

lots will be entered into a drawing in which four random winners will each be awarded a \$250 electricity credit to be applied to their bill. Be on the lookout for your ballot to arrive by mid-September. Don't miss out on your chance to participate in cooperative governance and also to be one of the lucky winners!

The results of the election will be announced at the 71st Annual Meeting of WCEC, which will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, October 9, 2009, at Governor Jim Hogg City Park in Quitman.



- Whenever possible, turn the air conditioning off, open the windows and use an electric fan to circulate the air.
- Don't place heat sources (TVs, lamps, computers, etc.) near the thermostat.
- Wear lightweight, loose and comfortable clothing to stay cooler and reduce the need for air conditioning.



HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY



The offices of Wood County EC will be OPEN Friday, July 3, for the convenience of our members.

Small Weatherization Steps Yield Big Results

BY MEGAN MCKOY

Weatherization—the process of sealing air leaks and properly insulating a home—can produce an average energy savings of \$358 per household per year, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

And good news! Through the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, known as the stimulus bill, you can recover 30 percent of the cost—up to \$1,500—of insulation materials and exterior doors, windows and roofs designed to help reduce your home’s heat loss or gain (installation costs are not covered). The credit applies to improvements made to existing homes in 2009 and 2010.

Here are a few of those improvements, as well as tips, that can help make your home more energy efficient:

AIR INFILTRATION

Air that leaks in and out of homes through cracks, crevices and holes can increase energy consumption. Here are some helpful tips to avoid air infiltration:

- Seal around pipes coming through walls.
- During hot and cold weather, ensure windows are closed tightly and locked.
- Ensure weatherstripping around doors and windows is tight.
- When your fireplace is not operating, its flue should be closed tightly, with a sign hanging from the flue handle warning that it is closed.
- Check the ceiling behind the cornice of built-in bookshelves for holes cut during construction.
- Drop-down, disappearing stairways should fit tightly into the ceiling and be carefully weatherstripped.
- Make sure your outside dryer vent door closes when the dryer is not in use. This requires cleaning away lint accumulation periodically.

INSULATION

Use home remodeling projects as a convenient means to add insulation to existing cavities. Different insulation requires different installation techniques—follow what is recommended by the manufacturer.

- If you have R-19 or less insulation in your attic, consider bringing it up to R-38 in moderate climates and R-49 in cold climates.
- In cold climates, if you have R-11 or less floor insulation, consider bringing it up to R-25.
- Blown-in wet cellulose or high-density foam insulation can stop infiltration better than fiberglass.
- Proper installation of insulation should prevent moisture in your walls.
- Make sure to have perimeter insulation around crawl spaces, basements and ceiling insulation—the most impor-

tant places to have adequate insulation.

- During construction, seal all openings, plates and walls with foam or caulk.
- Insulate and seal ducts in attics, crawl spaces, garages and other unheated areas.

WINDOWS

A considerable amount of heat transfers through windows. If you have single-pane windows, consider doing the following:

- Tighten and weatherstrip your old windows and add storm windows.
- Consider replacing old single-glazed windows with new double-glazed windows.
- In colder climates, low-emissivity coatings on glass can help reduce heat loss through windows.
- In hot climates, consider adding solar screening to west-facing windows that catch a lot of sun late in the day.



HEATING AND AIR CONDITIONING

Heating and air conditioning use the largest chunk of your home energy dollar. Keep them running “lean and mean.”

- HVAC systems should be checked to verify they are moving the correct amount of air. An HVAC technician can tell you whether they are.
- Heat pump and air-conditioning systems should be checked annually to verify they are properly charged, strictly in accordance with manufacturers’ guidelines.
- Inside and outside coils should be kept clean and free of debris.
- Return filters should be changed monthly.
- Have an HVAC technician check carefully for duct leaks. Leaks that are found should be sealed with fiberglass mesh and mastic sealant.

Megan McKoy writes on consumer affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Sources: Energy Star, Database for State Incentives for Renewables and Efficiency