On June 25, Wood County Electric Cooperative’s employees and management invited members to tour the new headquarters. Several hundred guests took us up on that offer, stopping by throughout the day for guided tours. The new facility is modern, sleek and clean, and boasts many technological advances for operations as well as for energy efficiency. But, in a nod to the past, throughout the halls there are many opportunities to reminisce about the rich culture and tradition of the cooperative, with a gallery of historic photos.

Because the open house was so popular and many folks did not have a chance to take a tour, we’ve decided to do it again on the morning of annual meeting.

From the early 1940s to 2013, a combination of buildings which were joined together, expanded, readjusted and remodeled over the years served as WCEC’s headquarters.
On February 19, 2013, WCEC welcomed members into the new building for service. A behind-the-scenes open house was held June 25, and another will be held October 11.

The first WCEC office building was situated north of the square in downtown Quitman in the late 1930s. The painted letters R.E.A. stood for the Rural Electric Administration, and Wood County Electric Cooperative’s name hung from the swinging sign underneath.
WCEC Invites All Members to the 75th Annual Meeting

NOTICE OF MEETING

Friday, October 11, 2013 • Governor Jim Hogg City Park • Quitman, Texas

Entertainment at noon • Meeting at 2 p.m.

The 75th Annual Meeting of Wood County Electric Cooperative will be held at 2 p.m. Friday, October 11, 2013, at Governor Jim Hogg City Park in Quitman, Texas. All members are invited and encouraged to attend. Beginning at noon, there will be musical entertainment by the award-winning Quebe Sisters Band.

Once again, this year’s election for directors will be conducted by mail ballot and includes candidates for WCEC Districts 5 and 6. Members currently serving on the board of directors in these districts are: Cathy Roberts, District 5, and Jane Roberson, District 6.

All members should look for their ballots to arrive in the mail soon. Be sure to detach and mail the postage-paid ballot in time to arrive by noon, October 10. Members who mail in a ballot will automatically be entered into a drawing in which four members will be randomly selected to each receive a $250 credit toward their electricity bill. Please DO NOT drop off or mail your ballot to WCEC. Only ballots received at the designated return mailing address before noon, October 10, 2013, will be counted and entered into the prize drawing.

Be sure to save and bring the other half of the card with you to the annual meeting. This card will be used for participation in door prize drawings for those present. As always, there will be many prizes, including 10 $75 electricity credits. And, because it’s our 75th anniversary, we’ll be giving away two separate grand prizes: a flat-screen high-definition television, and 12 months’ worth of $75 electricity credits, for a total prize value of $900.

We hope to see you at the annual meeting!
October 11 will be here before we know it, and it will be a special day in WCEC history, as it marks the 75th annual meeting. Because it’s the 75th, we wanted it to be extra-special, so we’ve planned for some superb entertainment with the renowned Quebe Sisters Band.

From Fort Worth, but globally known, this group is made up of sisters Grace, Sophia and Hulda Quebe, as well as guitarist Joey L. McKenzie (the sisters’ fiddle instructor and vocal coach and a world-champion fiddler) and swinging upright bassist Gavin Kelso. The Quebe Sisters Band is known and admired for its western swing, hot jazz, western and vintage country performances and traditional fiddle tunes played with intricate triple fiddles and three-part vocal harmony.

The band is a National Old-Time Fiddlers Contest champion title holder and has performed in Europe, Great Britain, Russia and across the United States. The group has appeared at the Kennedy and Lincoln Centers, on National Public Radio’s “A Prairie Home Companion,” and multiple times at the Grand Ole Opry. The Quebe Sisters Band has performed with billionaire/ukulele enthusiast Warren Buffett and for President George W. Bush and Laura Bush.

They’ve received many accolades over the years from countless entertainers. Of note, Ricky Skaggs has said, “The Quebe Sisters are some of the most talented people I’ve ever met. They do Texas proud. They live in Texas, sound like Texas, and they’re prettier than Texas bluebonnets and sweeter than sugar cane. I love the Quebe Sisters Band.”

The band specializes in music from the Golden Age and 1930s and ’40s swing—including big band, Texas and gypsy swing. Their music is not only about the feeling of the time, but also the philosophies and the pureness and trueness of the melodies and lyrics. They are sure to be lively crowd-pleasers.

In 1988 when WCEC celebrated the co-op’s 50th anniversary, Jerry Clower, the comic known as “The Mouth of Mississippi,” was the featured entertainment.
Another Year, Another Successful ETREYS

Annually, Wood County Electric Cooperative, along with eight other East Texas cooperatives, hosts the East Texas Rural Electric Youth Seminar. ETREYS is a leadership camp designed to foster positive ideas and values among young people while enhancing skills in leadership, problem-solving and interpersonal relationships.

This year’s camp was held in June at East Texas Baptist University in Marshall. WCEC sponsored 10 students and returning Youth Director Michael Carrasco, who was elected from the 2012 seminar to help lead this year’s camp.

Participants are high school sophomores and juniors from the WCEC service territory and are selected on the basis of overall excellence. The seminar consists of workshops, presentations and peer-group activities. Speakers include well-known personalities, motivational speakers and community leaders. The session topics range from leadership development to pure entertainment.

The WCEC students who attended the seminar all left better-equipped to take on leadership roles in their schools and communities. And two of the students brought home college scholarships. Jacob Hays was awarded the $1,000 John Dugan Scholarship, and Kenzie Cox earned a $500 scholarship. Jacob Hays was also elected by his peers to help lead the 2014 camp as a youth director.

Wood County Electric Cooperative ETREYS participants for 2013 were, from left, first row: Shelby Herring, Quitman High School; Skylar Margos, Alba-Golden High School; Aston Baucum, Mineola High School; Emilia Sanders, Quitman High School; second row: Kenzie Cox, Winnsboro High School; Lauren Bates, Quitman High School; Samantha Busby, Winnsboro High School; Laura Murdock, WCEC chaperone; and third row: Kylie O’Neal, WCEC chaperone; Jacob Hays, Alba-Golden High School; Clark Thomas, Alba-Golden High School; Youth Director Michael Carrasco, Yantis High School; Austin Dobbs, Quitman High School; and Jay Murdock, WCEC chaperone.

Wonderful content and leadership skills are still a hallmark of ETREYS, but we are glad that the fashion of the day was left to that decade.
About the Directors Elections

The Wood County Electric Cooperative Board of Directors consists of seven elected trustees, each residing in the WCEC district they serve. These board members are all local residents who are members of the cooperative, and they represent the needs of their neighbors and communities. The board meets monthly to determine guidelines for management and to approve policies and procedures.

As a qualification to serve on the board, each candidate must receive electric service in the WCEC district they wish to serve within the nine-county service territory. WCEC directors’ terms are for three years. Elections are held annually for alternate districts to allow for a continuity of business knowledge from year to year. WCEC’s bylaws contain exact details about director qualifications and the nomination/election process. The bylaws are posted on wcec.org, and paper copies are available at the cooperative.

Like homes and other businesses, farms of all types can lower their electricity bills by turning off or reducing use of lights and equipment in outbuildings.

Timers and sensors to automatically turn items off and on can help reduce energy consumption without interfering with safety or productivity.

Regular cleaning, maintenance and seasonal tuneups help keep larger equipment running at top efficiency.

Source: E Source