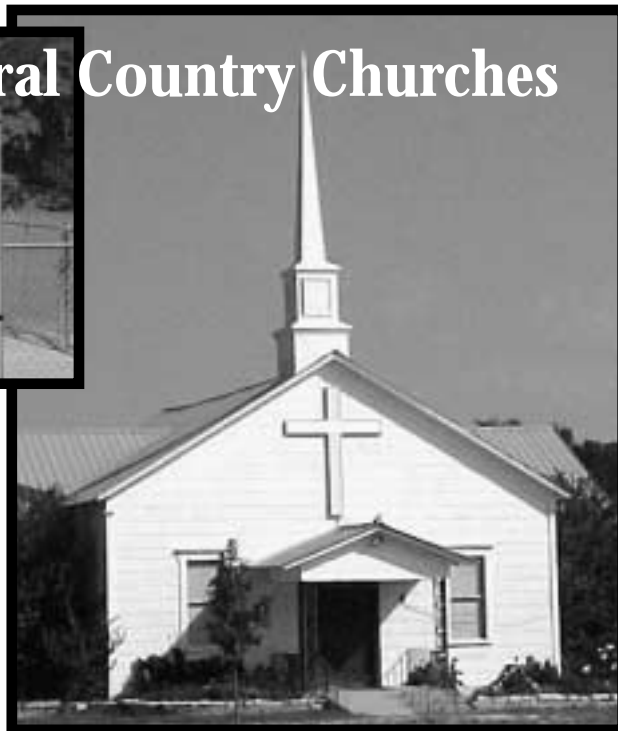


McLENNAN COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

P.O. Box 357 • McGregor, TX 76657 • www.mclennanelectric.com • (254) 840-2871

Rural Country Churches



Searsville Baptist Church is located three miles outside Valley Mills on FM 217. The church was organized on August 30, 1862. Rev. Andy Walker is the pastor of this vibrant, growing church today. The church has experienced growth in the past several years under Walker's leadership.

Searsville Baptist Church is building a fellowship hall, which will include new classrooms, nursery, kitchen, restrooms and other needed space. Searsville Baptist Church continues to serve area residents and members as it did in 1862.

Thanksgiving

Below are some responses to "What Thanksgiving means to me?"

Remembering all the "good" things that happened this year.

SPENDING TIME WITH MY CHILDREN.

Having all that good food to eat.

Missing a loved one already gone.

Leftovers.

WATCHING FOOTBALL.

I can't believe I ate that much.

Being with family.

Having some of every dessert.

Starting the "diet" the day after Thanksgiving.

As you and your family sit down to your Thanksgiving meal, let us not forget the ones who are serving our country, our Armed Forces. While we are here enjoying our freedom, our hearts go out to those who have fought and died to preserve these freedoms. We salute those serving our country; many are our neighbors and friends. Being part of the community is something we take seriously. We hope you and your family enjoy a Happy Thanksgiving.



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Member News



Office Construction Update



Construction is continuing on the new MCEC office located at 1111 S. Johnson Drive in McGregor. Kenneth Brown, our contractor, has kept the crews busy as the walls go up. We are excited and anxious for the building to be completed. Come in for a cup of coffee and look over the plans.

2003 Annual Meeting

The 2003 McLennan County Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting was held on October 21, 2003, at McGregor High School. Those attending were treated to health ideas from McGregor EMS and home security tips from the McGregor Police Department. MCEC handed out fingerprinting packets from the National Child Identification Program. Jeff Bowen, communications/key accounts manager of Brazos Electric Cooperative, was our keynote speaker, discussing natural gas prices and the impact on members' co-op rates. Elections of directors were held, along with reports from CEO/General Manager Rick Haile, Youth Tour winner Katy Weber, and Garland Cook, president of the board. Drawings for many door prizes were held during the meeting. Door prizes included a TV/DVD combo, PlayStation 2 and many other prizes, totaling over \$1,000. A good time was enjoyed by all.



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McLennan County Electric Cooperative
Your **"HomeTeam"** Advantage

Holiday Closing

McLennan County Electric Cooperative will be closed November 27 and 28 in observance of Thanksgiving. We will be open Monday, December 1. We hope you and your family enjoy a safe holiday together.



Child Identification Program

Cheri Zacharias, McGregor Elementary principal, is shown handing out National Child Identification packets furnished by McLennan County Electric Cooperative. These packets contain fingerprinting instructions for elementary-aged children and are part of a nationwide campaign sponsored by the American Football Coaches Association and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives. Jonesboro and McGregor ISD elementary students received these kits at the beginning of school.

Co-op Families

This month's spotlight is on Cortez Smith and family of Valley Mills. They have farmed and ranched for over five generations. Cortez's grandfather, John Smith, purchased a place near Hog Creek.



He instilled in his family the values of working hard and keeping the family together. C.C. "Num" Smith, Cortez's dad, remained on the family place alongside his father and raised his family.

In 1937, Cortez's family became members of McLennan County Electric Cooperative. Having electricity seemed like a luxury at a time when money was especially tight for rural families. Their base bill was \$2.45 for the first 25 kWh. Cortez recalled the time when they turned on the first light in amazement and then turned it off quickly, wondering how they were going to pay the bill.



Jeff Johnson

Jerry Wayne

Cortez

Member Spotlight



Five Generations Working the Land



Cortez Smith of Valley Mills

Cortez moved his family to 367 acres of Bosque River bottom located on FM 1637, just outside of Valley Mills. He farmed this land until his son, Jerry, took it over. Today it is Jerry's son, Kyle Wayne Smith, who is taking over the cattle/farming operation. Kyle Wayne is known as "Bubba" by his friends around Valley Mills. Often relying on the vast experience of his dad and grandfather, he is continuing the tradition of the family farm and ranch.

Based on his years of experience in farming and ranching, Cortez explained how tough it is now to make a living with a farm/ranch operation. He purchased his first tractor in 1943, a Farmall H with all of the equipment, at a cost of \$1,496. He purchased a Farmall 756 with a chisel plow for \$10,000 in 1974, which seemed awfully expensive at that time. In 1986, he purchased a Farmall 1086. Cortez did not disclose the price, but it is reasonable to say it was considerably more than the price of the tractor he bought in 1943. Bubba still has all the tractors and continues to use the later models today in his farming operation.

Cortez has served his community as a member of Valley Mills School Board, the board of directors of Bosque County Texas Farm Bureau, board of directors of McLennan County Electric Cooperative from 1979 until 1999, the ASCS board for 10



years, the Bosque County Appraisal Board, the State FFA Board and the State Water Board. Cortez received the "Pioneer Award" from the Texas Farm Bureau in 1995.

His involvement with Texas Farm Bureau includes holding nearly every office in the Bosque County district and serving on several committees statewide to further the cause of the Texas Farm Bureau.



Jerry

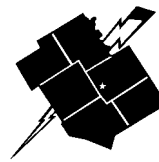
Bubba

Cortez

"I owe it to my family, there is no way I could have made it without them," Cortez said. "You must make good decisions when farming or operating a cattle operation. There is no room for bad decisions since you can be out of business quickly and left owing a lot of money. Relying upon one's family is the most important aspect in this business. I would not even attempt this today without their support and help."



At this Thanksgiving season, we are reminded to express our appreciation and thankfulness for each of our family members. Our members are part of the MCEC family and we strive to make the right decisions which affects them. Being a part of your community and looking after your best interest is what we do. Being *The Home Team Advantage* is not just a slogan, it is a way of life here at MCEC.



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Reminders

Photos

We are still in need of photos of members' families, children, grandkids, or something special to you. You can send these to Mike Hollingsworth at the office, or e-mail them to mike@mclecnanelectric.com

Scholarship and Youth Tour Programs

We will be sending out information on the MCEC Youth Tour program as well as scholarship applications to area schools in the near future. Watch for information on these.