

McLENNAN COUNTY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

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

MEMBERS WHO CARE

For the growing number of aging Americans, senior housing options and long-term care can be confusing. While many options are available, ranging from fully staffed nursing homes to independent living centers, the expense of such housing often exceeds affordability for the individual and their caregivers.

MCEC member Joy Schwalbe found herself in this very situation in 1998. She was earning a modest income doing laundry at the prison in Gatesville. Her mother had Alzheimer's, and Schwalbe was paying \$2,850 per month plus medical expenses to house her in a care facility. Then her father became ill and required care.

This prompted her to purchase a house and start an assisted living facility. State regulations allow individuals to care for relatives and up to three nonrelatives before further regulation becomes necessary.

Schwalbe is regularly audited by the state to ensure residents receive proper care. Auditors usually check how



many days of fresh vegetables are on hand, menus, safety procedures, medical record-keeping and incident report filing. When a resident suffers a fall, bump or other injury, an incident report is filed and family members must be notified.

Schwalbe maintains the facility herself, cooking meals, doing laundry and helping residents with daily tasks. She has no full-time staff, but does have weekend help. A licensed nurse comes



on a regular basis to perform routine checks such as blood pressure. A registered nurse is also on call.

The cost per resident typically ranges from \$1,500 to \$2,000, depending on the amount of care required. Schwalbe charges \$2,300 for the most extreme level of care the facility can provide.

There are also independent living apartments that have two small bedrooms, a living area and a small kitchen with appliances. Schwalbe also has a small cabin with a bedroom and living room but no kitchen. This, she says, would be ideal for someone on a smaller income who was seeking a degree of independence.

All residents have meals and weekly housekeeping provided for them. There is a call button in every room if immediate assistance is required. Residents have the option of doing their own laundry, but if necessary, it will be done for them. Residents have to be mobile to be accepted. A waiver for nonmobile patients has to be obtained before Schwalbe can accept them.

The facility features a homelike atmosphere. Residents are allowed to make their rooms as much like home as they want. Activities are normally carried out in the common living area. Many residents bring their own furniture with them and pets are welcome. Residents often choose assisted living facilities like Schwalbe's because they simply don't like the hospital atmosphere of most nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.



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METER TAMPERING HAS SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

Tampering with an electric meter has serious consequences. People who are not trained to work with electric equipment could be electrocuted. Safety is the main issue, but meter tampering or electricity theft may include the possibility of criminal prosecution.

Even with these consequences, a few members still tamper with their meters, often unaware of safety and criminal consequences.

You may be asking yourself why someone would do this. Often, power has not been turned on yet at a location or it has been disconnected because of a lack of payment. Customers sometimes will alter the meter in an effort to turn on the power, committing a crime because the meter belongs to MCEC. Then they are stealing electricity from MCEC and ultimately you, our members, because theft is added to our cost of doing business!

The minimum consequence for such an action is a charge of \$100 per meter for the first offense and \$200 per meter for each subsequent offense, plus the cost of electricity used. When this is added to the cost of electricity, connection fees (or reconnection fees) and required

deposits, the cost is high, plus you could be injured or prosecuted.

In October 2005, the MCEC board of directors amended the meter tampering tariff to include the possibility of these charges if a meter seal is found cut or missing. If the meter seal at your location is cut or missing at the present time, please notify the office so that we can schedule a crew to reseal the meter. Resealing the meter now could help avoid MCEC charges in the future.

If there is ever a need for the meter to be removed at your location, just let us know. MCEC will work with you to make the process as convenient as possible.



HELPING THOSE WHO HELP OTHERS



A voluntary, member-funded program supporting local, nonprofit organizations in MCEC's service area



China Spring Band Boosters



Troy Athletic Club



McGregor United Fund



Robinson Volunteer Fire Department



McLennan Community Resource Center

NEW WASHERS AND DRYERS OFFER STYLE AND SAVINGS

Looking to replace that old washer that sounds like an earthquake on the spin cycle and is ratcheting up your electric bill? Take advantage of new washers and dryers that boast both stylish design and energy conserving features.

Washer and dryer manufacturers are introducing colorful new models in red, blue, silver and more—along with sleek designs that include storage drawers for detergent and other laundry supplies.

Most new washers also are Energy Star-certified, which means they use 50 percent less energy to clean your clothes than standard models, and could save you up to \$110 a year. Dryers cannot earn Energy Star certification because they all

use similar amounts of energy.

Special features on new washers also make it easier for you to save energy. Look for these features when

buying a new washer or dryer:

- Front-loading washers. They use 40 percent less water and less energy because there is no agitator.

- More temperature control options. Washing and rinsing in cold water saves the most energy.

- Models with several options for load size and shorter gentle cycles. Make sure you do a full load every time or adjust the water level if you don't.

- A dryer with a moisture sensor that shuts off when clothes are dry. This saves energy and is better for the fabric.

- A dryer with a cool-down or permanent press cycle. This uses cool air at the end of the cycle, which saves energy and prevents wrinkling.



SURGE PROTECTION

Is your electronic equipment protected against lightning storms?

We have surge protection equipment available for purchase that will offer peace of mind when those storms roll in. Call the MCEC office at (254) 840-2871 and ask for Ron Poston.



SCHOLARSHIP AND YOUTH TOUR

MCEC is proud to announce that we participate in the Government-in-Action Youth Tour sponsored in conjunction with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and Texas Electric Cooperatives (TEC). The youth tour contest is

held for high school students (juniors) and the winner will receive a two-week, all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., in June.

We have sent out information on the MCEC Youth Tour Program, as well as scholarship applications, to area schools. Watch for information on these or check out the website at www.mclennanelectric.coop.



ANNUAL OGLESBY RATTLESNAKE HUNT

This year marks the 37th Annual Rattlesnake Hunt sponsored by the Oglesby Lions Club. The hunt will be held Saturday and Sunday, February 25 and 26, at the Oglesby Community Center.

Hunter's registration fee is \$5 per person with registration times on Saturday at 8 a.m. and Sunday at 10 a.m. Prizes are awarded for the longest rattlesnake, the smallest rattlesnake and the heaviest rattlesnake.

If you are planning to attend the snake show, entry fees are \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. Snake handling shows on Saturday will begin at 10 a.m., with the last show starting at 5 p.m. The shows on Sunday will start at 11 a.m., with the last show beginning at 4 p.m.

While the Oglesby Lions Club sponsors the Annual Rattlesnake Hunt, it has become a community-wide effort through the years. The Oglesby Volunteer Fire Department is preparing for barbecue sales; the Oglesby 4-H Club will also have a concession stand available.

Directions from Highway 84 are



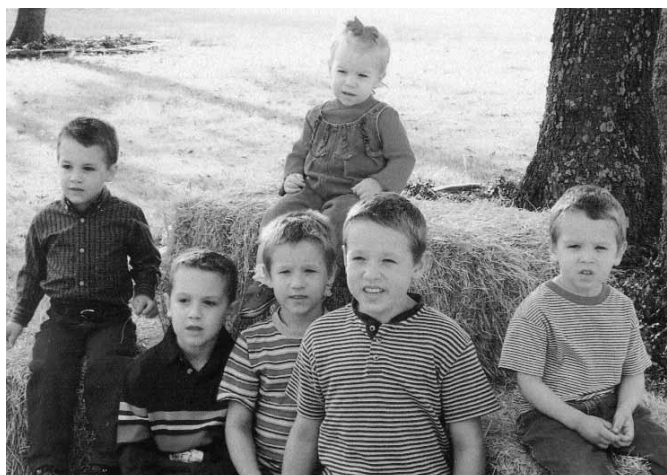
to turn south onto FM 1996 and travel 1.25 miles into town. The community center is left on Old Oglesby Road just before the railroad crossing.

Booth spaces are available for vendors to rent for \$20; that fee includes both days. If you need more information on booth space rentals, contact James Sullins at (254) 456-2214.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



Robert Snider with granddaughters Rebecca and Kaitlyn Hudock at the Temple Tractor Show.



(Front) Dylan and Hunter Dreyer and Andrew, Stephen and Joshua Westerfeld, (back) Rebekah Westerfeld. All are grandchildren of Kermit and Judy Dreyer.