

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Beavers Elected.....1  
Material Theft.....1  
Feature: Turner reflections.....2  
Rate Watch.....7  
Manager's Message.....9  
Youth Tour.....10  
Solar Window Screens.....12

## Beavers accepts leadership roles

Ray Beavers, United Cooperative Services general manager and chief executive officer recently accepted a greater leadership role in regional, state and national cooperative affairs after he was elected in June to serve as a Group 3



**RAY BEAVERS**

director for Texas Electric Cooperatives, and also named chairman of the Rural Electric Management Development Council (REMDC), a consortium of cooperatives comprised nationally of 55 rural electric systems.

Both appointments mirror Beaver's penchant for having all cooperative employees involved at every level of the industry and his

Please see **BEAVERS**, Page 6

## Longtime Service



**THIRTY AND COUNTING**—Billy Poland, left, was recently recognized by United Cooperative Services Board President, Jack McCaslin for 30 years of service to the cooperative board. Mr. Poland, who represents United's District I in western Johnson County (Bono to Lakeside Village), began serving as director in 1976. The longtime agriculture businessman was born in Crowley, Texas, but has resided in the Bono area for more than 40 years. He is a retired dairy representative and was in farming for many years.

## Thieves getting wound-up

■ Thefts of copper and aluminum plague industry



Thieves have never been renowned for considering the risks of their trade, or their percentages for success in being on the wrong side of the law.

And recent thefts of copper and aluminum from electric utility substations and distribution lines across local, state and national systems seem to indicate that, in fact, the average thief today hasn't gotten much smarter.

Utility thefts, while sporadic and not always widely reported, have been on the increase nationwide since May. A growing number of deaths have been attributed to thefts occurring in

Please see **THEFTS**, Page 11

# UNITED COOPERATIVE SERVICES

P.O. BOX 16 • CLEBURNE, TEXAS • 817-556-4000



# Hope for Tomorrow

— By MAURI MONTGOMERY —

**T**ime may have wrinkled her skin some, but it has not wrinkled the soul of Clarice Turner, who at 95 years old has amassed and forgotten more life lessons than many of us will ever learn.

The twinkle of her vivacious spirit is still evident in bright brown eyes that have watched nearly a century's worth of ups and downs—and very nearly all of it from within a 30-mile circle around her present home in Hico.

If you can imagine a little white-haired woman who not so very long ago defied conventional

wisdom by kicking her up her heels to fiddle music until she passed out on the dance floor—then only after recently recovering from pneumonia—then you might have a better picture of this 95-year-old's determination to seize the day, every day.

"I had pneumonia in 2000. I had a pacemaker put in me in 2002. I lost my sister Bernice in 2004," she said. And in the very next breath, she summed up that chronology by noting she felt those trials should surely be "enough."

Still, she leaves the impression that there is plenty of daylight left in this decade and she surely intends to find out what may come of it.

**Please see HOPE, Page 4**



HOPE, continued from Page 3

**Turner, like many** of her generation, has been tested to the core of her very existence more than once in a lifetime that has spanned some of humanity's greatest achievements, as well as many of the world's greatest tribulations.

She was a year old when the Titanic sank. By her 11<sup>th</sup> birthday, insulin was being heralded as a cure for diabetes. She was 13 years old when insecticides were first introduced and used to mitigate crop damage in America's bread basket, and 18-years old when the U.S. stock market crashed and

spiraled into the Great Depression. From toddler to adult, she has lived through the global turbulence of two world wars, the Cold War, Korean War, Vietnam, and now the Middle East.

Hers was a day when personal challenges were ample. You didn't have to go looking for them, they found you.

"I've been over the mountains and through the valleys. More often though, it seemed like I was always climbing to get to the top of the mountain, and just when I would get near the peak the rocks would slide and send me down to start all over again."

Her father left her family to cope alone when she was 10 months old. She has outlived all of her siblings—three brothers and three sisters. She first married at age 22, and was divorced three years later. She remarried in 1942 and has since survived her late husband, Marvin, who passed away 10 days before the couple's 59<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary. She watched two homes burn to the ground, one attributed to an unattended iron and the

other to lightning.

And while she has to pause at times to retrieve details from the running archives of her long life, or to decipher what her failing hearing may miss, she still has an uncanny ability to recite dates with a clarity that would shame others half her age.



**A SPIRIT OF THE AGES**—Clarice Turner, 95, of Hico, Texas.

"We joined the REA (Rural Electric Administration) in 1947," she recalls without hesitation, "and it was the difference between daylight and dark."

Through sheer longevity, Mrs. Turner is the granddame of United's membership—she was an Erath County Electric Cooperative member before Erath County Electric and Johnson County Electric consolidated into what is now United Cooperative Services, in

2000. Not only is she an historical icon for the cooperative but also for an era that ushered electricity into rural

**"I'VE BEEN OVER THE MOUNTAIN AND THROUGH THE VALLEYS. MORE OFTEN THOUGH, IT SEEMED LIKE I WAS ALWAYS CLIMBING TO GET TO THE TOP OF THE MOUNTAIN."**

America: a godsend to the unforgiving and often impoverished drudgery of country life.

She also symbolizes United’s credo to always remain mindful, in every facet of our daily operations, of the little old lady at the end of the line—a little lady who depends on the electric service we provide and also worries how to pay for it on a fixed income with medical expenses.

It wasn’t until President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed an order in 1935 establishing the REA that the disparities between city and country living were eased. One of the key components of Roosevelt’s New Deal initiatives, the REA provided loans and other assistance so that rural cooperatives could build and run their own electrical distribution systems. Member-owned co-ops like the two formed in Johnson and Erath counties in 1938 began to spring up across the nation and revitalized the fabric of a rural America ravaged by drought, dust storms, and the Great Depression.

**The rural** electrification movement became one of the most successful government programs ever enacted. Within two years, REA helped bring electricity to some 1.5 million farms through 350 rural cooperatives in 45 states. Almost half of all the nation’s farms received electricity by 1942—nearly all became connected by the 1950s.

“Life was pretty hard before we had electricity. When we finally got it out on the farm, it was a big day — like buying a new dress.”

Even so, Turner has through the years guarded her use of the resource as if it were her last canteen of water between miles of desert and the next oasis. Her monthly co-op bills typically average less than \$50 at her 112 acre farm.

She doesn’t give up on anything easily, whether it is her independence or her animals. Her daily companion is a Catahoula dog named Pepper. She still

**“YOUNG PEOPLE TODAY THINK PEOPLE LIKE ME ARE STINGY. WE’RE NOT, WE’RE JUST ECONOMICAL.”**

keeps a prized Limousine bull named Reagan (a purebred Republican) and a small herd of beef cattle she refuses to sell despite the pleadings of her niece, Naomi Shelton, and her husband Roby.

“I went through the Depression years in the teens, the ‘20s, ‘30s, and ‘40s. Young

people today think people like me are stingy. We aren’t, we’re just economical. I don’t waste anything. I don’t waste water. I don’t waste food. When I go out to eat, I eat half of what’s there and bring the other half home to eat for supper,” she said.

She remembers the hardships she and her family endured before REA closed the gulf that had earlier divided the nation into two separate classes of society: those who had electricity, and those who didn’t.

“Before we had electricity we used oil lamps, and they didn’t put out very much light. So, for reading or anything else you did, you had to get close to the lamp. Even then, you still couldn’t see very well,” she said. “Our only source for water was a windmill and tank. We hauled zinc buckets of water to the house from the water

Please see HOPE, Page 6



**FRONT GATE**—The entrance to Mrs. Turner’s farm just outside of Hico fittingly reflects the work ethic she was accustomed to as a child of the Great Depression.

## HOPE, continued from Page 5

tank twice a day for bathing and washing. I think I had to share bath water with Melvin (one of my brothers) in a Number Three tub that was right behind the stove. We had to gather wood for the stove every day. We had to heat our iron on the stove and we used a block-ice stand covered with a burlap sack to keep our milk and food fresher for a longer time.”

Mrs. Turner said much of her life as a youngster was hand-to-mouth. If not for a very dear mother and a lot of hard work, she believes she and her brothers and sisters might have suffered greater hardships than they did. The fatherless family toiled long hours each day in the family garden and the fields. And as one of the older children, she had to learn how to manage a mule and plow without letting either get into the crop rows.

“We had milk cows, we grew corn, and we also raised chickens and turkeys. We’d gather the eggs, and then we’d haul them, along with the cream and the crops, by wagon into Hico where we traded for other supplies,” Turner said. She then chuckles to herself, “Hico hasn’t

changed a whole lot since then.”

Electricity may have been “the difference between daylight and dark” to Mrs. Turner, and being connected may have brought a wealth of new conveniences she had never dreamed she might one day enjoy. But through all of her life-changing experiences and the perspectives that may have accompanied them, she still clings to an age-old truth that still places more emphasis on where she is going than where she has been:

**Forget about yesterday.**

**Live today.**

**Hope for a tomorrow.**

And after climbing mountains her whole life, Clarice Turner’s

wishes for tomorrow are as frugal as one might expect from someone who clawed their way through the Great Depression.

“You know what I wish for the most? I wish all things were within arm’s reach so I could grab them without having to get up. When I mop, I *sit*. When I hoe, I *sit*. If I can’t reach it with my cane, then it’s probably not going to get done.”

Even if she hardly ever uses them, United Cooperative Services will always take pride in keeping Mrs. Turner’s lights on. She is a part of who we are and where we’ve come from, and she and those like her, will always be a beacon for all of the challenges we have yet to overcome.

## A RICH LIFE

Clarice Turner reminisces about her life while sitting among some of her momentos.



## BEAVERS, continued from Page 1

drive to position United Cooperative Services at the forefront among all cooperatives.

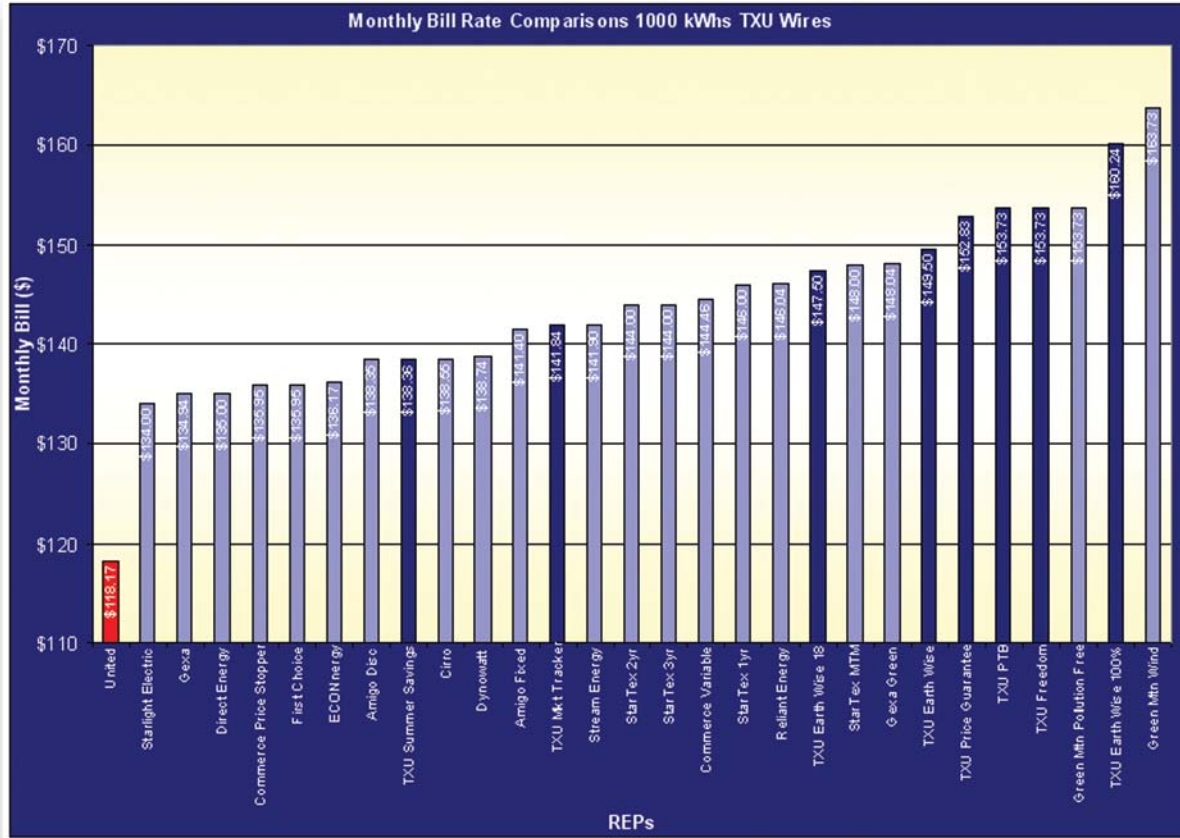
Mr. Beavers will serve a three-year term as a TEC director, filling a seat vacated by Audie Morris. Two other new directors from Groups 2 and 6 joined Beavers on the board following this year’s elections.

Beavers is already currently serving as the chair of TEC’s Government Relations Committee and has also served on TEC’s Rural Friends/Acre Board of Directors. He will also chair REMDC for one year, which will also include his oversight of the

organization’s next annual meeting in Fort Worth, June 3-6, 2007.

REMDC consists of a group of rural electric systems that have voluntarily joined together over the past fifty years to exchange ideas and information about programs and practices which can be effectively applied in the management of rural electric cooperatives. The membership represents all sizes of rural electric systems. The REMDC Council meets as a group once each year to discuss management concepts and philosophies, and methods and techniques that have proven effective in practical, on-the-job situations.

# RATE WATCH



## ■ How United measures up among other electric providers

No matter where power costs are, they are never where anyone wishes them to be—generally, a new 10-year low.

But today, the truth is that the nation's energy costs will likely never get much lower than they are now, given the technology we have and demand that continues to call for more and more capacity.

But even as energy prices go up across Texas, United members can

take some comfort in knowing that their monthly costs are still a great deal lower than costs paid by customers of investor-owned utilities.

A big reason for that difference is that cooperatives like United don't exist to maximize rates of return to corporate shareholders. We provide you the most reliable power and delivery we can, and at the lowest possible cost, because we work for

you. As a United member, you are both the customer and the owner, and you have a voice in everything this cooperative does.

And in an effort to keep you as informed as possible about changing rates in the North Texas electric utility market, United will begin publishing *Rate Watch* (a third-party report) as a regular feature to our local pages in Texas Co-op Power each month.



# Time is drawing near

Mark your calendars now and make plans to attend  
**United Cooperative Services'**

## **ANNUAL MEETING** **October 5, 2006**

**Health and Conservation Fair 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.**  
**Annual Meeting to follow at 7 p.m.**

## **Statement of nondiscrimination**

**United Electric Cooperative Services, Inc.** is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. In accordance with State and Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, United Cooperative Services is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). This policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and

Federal laws and Cooperative policies.

The person responsible for coordinating the organization's nondiscrimination compliance efforts is the Cooperative's General Manager/CEO. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from and/or file a written complaint. To file a complaint of discrimination, contact the Cooperative's Human Resources Director or the General Manger/CEO, or write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

# Placing our priorities

I hope you have had the opportunity to read some of the first stories written by our new Communications Manager and PowerTalk Editor, Mauri Montgomery.

His most recent story, which you have probably already read, features a special person to all of us at United. When she has been able to, Mrs. Turner comes to the annual meetings each year to demonstrate her support of her cooperative. Yes, it is her cooperative; she knows it better than most. So many people today view United as just another electric company. Well folks, we certainly don't think of ourselves that way.

Mrs. Turner, like many of you, personifies the true spirit of the cooperative program.

Cooperatives came to life during a time when people in the rural areas could not afford to have for-profit power companies build electric line to them. Rural Americans like Mrs. Turner continued to battle the struggles of life without electricity until REA created the opportunity for them to become owners in their very own distribution system. Those pioneers quickly understood the implications of the REA movement. They realized they could form a cooperative and then have an organization that served their interests as both members and owners. You see, a cooperative is a rarity among most of today's business organizations because it combines its resources so that every member can benefit. At a cooperative, it does not matter who you are or what you do, every member is important.

I'm a visual person, so I often try to describe things visually to make a point. And when I'm talking about our business approach in this organization, I use an image given to me many years ago by one of my mentors. He advised me to



**RAY BEAVERS**  
General Manager/CEO

think of the little lady living on the end of the lines before I finalized decisions that would impact her financially. He told me that little lady would pay her electric bill before she would pay for her medicine because electricity is a priority, not a divine gift. My mentor was right, and we do care about financial impacts on all of our members, today and in the future.

We look forward to our next annual meeting, which will be Oct. 5 at Glen Rose, because we hope we will get

to see Mrs. Turner and many of you. We love the opportunity to walk around and say thank you to our members for supporting their cooperative. We also get the chance to establish new friendships that mean a lot to us, too. Every member of this cooperative is important to us, and we will do our best to provide you the best service possible with respect and admiration. We take our roles seriously in making your cooperative the best in the nation. We do all this because we believe we are correctly **placing our priorities**. We know folks like Mrs. Turner represent the strength of this cooperative, but she also represents our daily focus to do our best in delivering her service with as little financial impact as possible, in today's world.



**The power that connects us.**



Your Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## Four students represent UCS at 2006 Youth Tour

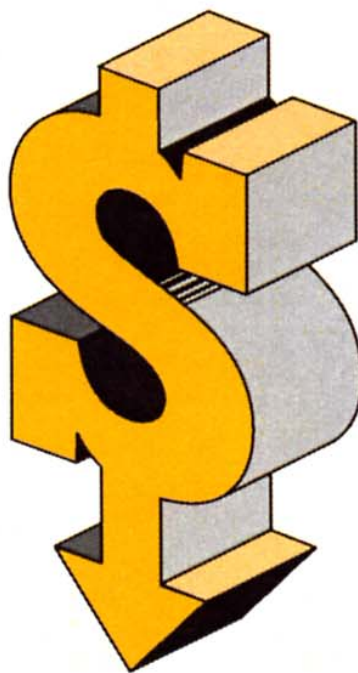
Four students representing United Cooperative Services were among about 100 Texas teens who recently served as “ambassadors” for their communities and the state’s rural electric electrification program when they traveled to Washington D.C., June 8-16, to take part in the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour.

Every summer, more than 1,300 high school students from across the nation take part in the Youth Tour experience — a nine-day itinerary that includes visits to national historic landmarks, behind-the-scenes glimpses of governmental affairs and personal audiences with lawmakers to discuss some of today’s most pressing legislative issues.

United’s student ambassadors this year were Glen Rose High School sophomore **Lauren Payne**, daughter of United member **Jeff Payne**; Alvarado High School junior **Jessica Woodard**, daughter of United members **David and Karol Woodard**; Godley High School junior **Mariam Ainsworth**, daughter of **Greg and Mary Jo Ainsworth**; and Huckabay ISD sophomore **Scott Collum**, son of United members **Dale and Kathy Collum**.

While on tour, the students had the opportunity to visit presidential monuments, the White House, the U.S. House and Senate Chambers, the Supreme Court, Washington National Cathedral, Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian Institution, war monuments and a host of other national sites.

United selected the four students this spring from a pool of more than 40 applicants who completed an online application.



## Save Energy Save Money

Setting your thermostat to 78° in summer and 68° in winter saves up to 47 percent in energy costs.

*(U.S. Department of Energy)*

### **You Have the Power!**

# Material thefts increase

**THEFTS, continued from Page 1**

or near energized distribution areas, and the rising trend in material theft is causing a great deal of concern among electric providers. In several instances, thieves have been brazen enough to climb poles and cut out whole spans of neutral conductor from three-phase primary distribution lines.

United is just one of many Texas electric cooperatives pinched by burglars within the past three months.

Due to rapid economic growth in China and India, and increased worldwide demand for raw materials, demand for steel and other metals has not only pushed world markets to record highs, but also the street values for scrap metal.

Copper, which was traded in 2003 for around \$.85/lb. is now drawing \$4 per pound. Aluminum has followed that upward spiral, as well. Today, aluminum is being traded in the \$1.40/lb. range, nearly \$.75/lb. more than in 2003.

More than 400 co-op customers

lost service in May for approximately 15 minutes after thieves stripped copper wire from a substation on Highway 220 about 20 miles north of Hico.

While the burglary of the Johnsonville substation didn't cause another scheduled outage to make repairs, the theft was just one of several burglaries the cooperative has incurred in the past two months.

Keeping power safe and affordable is a priority at United. That's why the cooperative routinely inspects its distribution system and equipment—to ensure we're doing our best to protect members from the risks associated with theft of electricity and utility materials.

United has taken an even more proactive approach to this serious problem by considering additional measures for monitoring company material yards and making employees and members more aware of suspicious activity in and around co-op substations and distribution lines.

“Material theft is, of course, a great concern to us because compensating for theft drives up prices for everyone, but the thief,” said general manager/CEO, Ray Beavers. “But our real concern is for the safety of our employees and members. Thieves have no regard for their own safety, or they wouldn't be tempting fate. But the wire they are stealing is part of a safety net that has been engineered to prevent personal injury. We aren't taking these thefts lightly.”



# ENERGY WISE



## ■ Solar screens open a new window of opportunity for energy savings.

**T**he old saw that goes, “you can’t see the forest for the trees,” can literally hit pretty close to home sometimes, especially when it comes to looking for ways to improve the energy efficiency of our houses.

Very often, we think energy saving improvements will break the bank, even if they appear to be a good long-term investment. But maybe we can’t see the screens for the windows.

Quality solar window screens can enhance the beauty of your home, provide privacy during daylight hours, protect your home’s interior from damaging UV rays, and most importantly, greatly reduce your utility bills.

The most energy efficient solar window screens typically install on the outside of your windows and reduce the heat and glare coming in from southern and western home exposures where there is little or no additional shading provided by landscaping or awnings.

Most solar window screens are made of durable, vinyl-coated fiberglass yarn woven in an open pattern that blocks up to 90 percent of the sun’s heat

coming through windows and they are virtually invisible from the inside. They also come in a variety of designer colors including black, bronze, gold, gray, brown and lighter colors like white, cream and sand, making them an attractive enhancement to any home.

Applying solar screens dramatically reduces the amount of sunlight striking the window because it allows the sun’s heat to be absorbed, reflected, or carried away by convective air currents created by the screen’s warm surface area.

Screens are easy to install on the outside of almost any window, sometimes using the frames of existing insect screens. And unlike some other window treatments,

solar screens work whether the windows are open or closed, and they are easy to remove again in winter to let the sun in. If kept in place during winter, the screen’s fabric has the advantage of reducing wind chill across the window’s surface, which reduces heat loss and saves on winter heating costs.

With costs ranging from \$40 to \$80 per window, depending on the size and grade of the screen, solar screens can be a practical energy saving solution.

