



Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, Inc.

UP  DATE



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A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Daniel G. Laws



"We want to provide the best of both worlds. . ."

I am writing to you while on the road to the Board Meeting in Fort Stockton. The vastness of the area evokes thoughts of what those who settled this area must have endured in the days before the co-op existed. The climate is harsh, and yet, the people who inhabit the area are anything but harsh. In my opinion, country people have friendliness, and warmth that many of our city friends have lost, perhaps in the hustle and bustle of city life. Maybe it's because they don't know, or care to know their neighbors. Maybe it's because neighbors don't need to rely on one another as much as they do out in the country. The great thing about living out here or a small town is that you know you can depend on your neighbors to help you out if you really need it. (Now, I don't mean that there aren't exceptions to the rule. Of course, there are always a few rotten apples in any barrel, but for the most part, I have found this to be true.)

That neighborly concern is one reason that the Co-op works so well, and has for 57 years. Many of our newer members may not have any concept of how or why the co-op was founded, so for those who don't know, here it is in a nutshell. The Co-op was founded by people in isolated rural areas, which were not "profitable" enough areas to justify electrification by the big private power companies. This may come as a shock to some of you, but most of the areas that Rio Grande serves today are *still* not considered profitable by most of the private power companies. So, needless to say, the Co-op is non-profit. The same thing goes for the Co-op's internet service, RioNet. Sure, there are some other internet providers in some of our areas, but you don't see them fiercely competing for subscribers in areas like Langtry, Mountain Home, and Six Shooter. If we were in business strictly for the money,

we wouldn't be providing service to these places either. But the point is that we do provide service to these areas because we believe, just as the Co-op's founders did, that rural people should have the same opportunities as those in more urban areas, and we are committed to following through. Our prices are very competitive, and our service is unsurpassed, because our people make the difference. It all goes back to that 'neighborly', helpful, attitude I was talking about.

You've probably been seeing our articles on the addition of our El Paso Area Office to serve Ft. Bliss Military Base. Why is this important to you, as a member of the Co-op? Because the more members the cooperative has, the more members there are to split the expenses among, and with 1.1 million acres, Fort Bliss is a big member, so to speak. RioNet will also be available in the El Paso area. The number of potential subscribers there is very large, and could help offset some of the expenses incurred in providing access in the more rural areas I was talking about previously.

Just because we're rural, that doesn't mean that we can't be high tech and cutting edge. (And that goes for our members and subscribers, as well.) Rio Grande continues to integrate new technology into both our electric cooperative structure, and RioNet Internet Service, as well. We want to provide the best of both worlds for our members. And that's another reason Rio Grande Electric Cooperative is

"Your Home Team Advantage".