



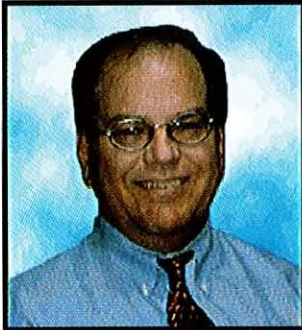
"Owned By Those We Serve"

Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, Inc.

UP DATE



July, 2002



A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Daniel G. Laws

This Independence Day is perhaps the most significant in our history as a free nation. Not since the battle for independence had we faced an aggressor on home soil. The tragedy of September 11 has been, and continues to be, a media focal point -- but has never been trivialized. For a time after 9-11, there was a tendency to look at others through suspicious eyes. We long for the day when the divisions of nationality will dissolve -- eliminating the hyphenated-American syndrome once and for all. If some find it hard to drop the hyphen, then let us all be known only by the name "Proud-American", for this horrible event has only served to solidify the resolve of Americans of every race, creed, and national origin to defend and protect this great nation of ours.

As our country and our world evolve and change, we find that not only are we all connected by shared feelings, we are indeed connected through our communications more than was ever possible before. Even those who live in the most remote areas will soon be able to communicate through the Internet.

According to one report by the Texas Telephone Association, there were still seven areas in Texas unable to receive dial up Internet service as of December, 2000. Rio Grande ECI is proud to announce that, through the expansion of RioNet, at least two of these areas now have access to the same communications options available to the rest of the country.

RioNet, RGEC's own Internet service, is expanding to every RGEC area office location. Those of you who can call your area office locally- without it being a long distance call -- should, by the time you read this, be able to get RioNet. We believe that, just as gaining electric power was important to rural people long ago, gaining access to the information super highway is important today. Using home computers and the Internet, we conduct our business, keep in touch with friends and family, and give our children a world of educational opportunities.

The Internet is giving small communities and their citizens the opportunity to advertise and market goods and services at a reasonable rate. This commerce helps to sustain rural development, to the benefit of all in the region.

The leadership of Rio Grande ECI is committed to making sure that our rural members have equal access to the same necessities that those in more urban areas enjoy- whether it is electric power or Internet service. Because the leadership of RGEC is comprised of members just like you, they shape the design of the cooperative. I encourage you to take an active part in determining your representation through voting in the director election, the wheels of which have already been set in motion. Nominating committees have been formed to select director candidates for upcoming vacancies on the board. What makes co-ops special is that each member has an equal voice in determining the leadership of the co-op through their vote in the director election. Directors are from the areas they serve. They come from generally the same backgrounds and have many of the same experiences as those they represent. These are just a few of the *many* reasons why you can call Rio Grande Electric Cooperative

"Your Home Team Advantage".

