



CO-OP MONTH | OCTOBER 2016



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

COOPERATIVES ARE:

VOLUNTARY • DEMOCRATIC • EQUITABLE • INDEPENDENT • INFORMATIVE • COLLABORATIVE • COMMUNITY



Co-ops Build a Better World

October is National Co-op Month



Being part of a cooperative means being part of something special. To honor National Cooperative Month, Sam Houston Electric Cooperative is celebrating along with 30,000 other cooperative businesses serving more than 120 million people nationwide. “Cooperatives Build” is the theme of this

year’s National Cooperative Month, spotlighting the advantages that cooperatives offer to their members and the communities where they live and work.

Across the United States, cooperatives provide 850,000 jobs that collectively pay \$74 billion in yearly wages. They also generate more than \$650 billion in sales and other revenue annually.

Rural America is served by a network of more than 900 electric cooperatives, most of which were formed in the 1930s and ’40s to deliver electricity to farms and communities that large, investor-owned power companies had no interest in serving because of the higher costs involved with electrifying broad areas with small populations. Sam Houston EC brought power to rural East Texas back in 1939.

Your Co-op’s board, staff and management direct all of our efforts toward enhancing quality of life for you, the members. This goes beyond the delivery of reliable and cost-effective electricity to include expanded services, support for community service endeavors, and scholarships and educational opportunities.

Our Cooperative delivers electricity to 54,000 members in parts of 10 East Texas counties. As a not-for-profit Cooperative, any revenue generated beyond what is required for expenses is either returned to our members as capital credits or reinvested to make system upgrades that improve the delivery of electricity to our members. Either way, our Co-op revenue goes back to “Main Street,” not “Wall Street.”

COOPERATIVES BUILD TRUST

Co-ops adhere to the Seven Cooperative Principles, which help to build trust between the Co-op and its members. Through the fifth principle—Education, Training and Information—we encourage members to learn about the way co-ops work and contribute to the development of our communities. We also encourage our members to learn about the safe and efficient use of electricity— just visit our website (www.samhouston.net) to see how.

COOPERATIVES BUILD COMMUNITY

The seventh cooperative principle is Concern for Community. Cooperatives work for the sustainable development of their communities through employee involvement

in local organizations, charitable contributions to community efforts and support for schools. Sam Houston EC employees donate their time to a variety of causes they care about, including Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), Lions Clubs and youth sports.

COOPERATIVES BUILD DEMOCRACY

The second cooperative principle, Democratic Member Control, gives members a voice in the Co-op’s policies and decisions. Members control the Co-op by voting on candidates for the board of directors.

The democratically-elected directors keep members’ well-being in mind each time they make a decision on behalf of the Co-op. This arrangement keeps local communities strong and stable while showing how combined efforts can improve conditions for everyone.

The directors continuously are working to improve our Cooperative by visiting with members and continuing their education on upcoming industry topics.

COOPERATIVES BUILD A BETTER WORLD

When people talk about “the cooperative difference,” they’re referring to the advantages that co-ops offer their members. With the Seven Cooperative Principles binding these unique and diverse businesses, co-ops truly can build a better world.

Follow our website and Facebook page to see how Sam Houston Electric Cooperative will give back to our members this month. We just might be in your neighborhood.



Don't Be Fooled by Energy Myths



Eating carrots will greatly improve your eyesight, cracking your knuckles leads to arthritis, watching too much TV will harm your vision.

We've all heard the old wives' tales, but did you know there are also many misconceptions about home energy use? Don't be fooled by common energy myths.

Myth: The higher the thermostat setting, the faster the home will heat (or cool).

Many people think that walking into a chilly room and raising the thermostat to 85 degrees will heat the room more quickly. This is not true.

Thermostats direct a home's HVAC system to heat or cool to a certain temperature. Believe it or not, drastically adjusting the thermostat setting will not make a difference in how quickly you feel warmer.

The same is true for cooling. The U.S. Department of Energy recommends setting your thermostat to 78 degrees

during summer months, and 68 degrees during winter months.

Myth: Opening the oven door to check on a dish doesn't really waste energy.

While it can be tempting to check the progress of that dish you're cooking in the oven, opening the oven door does waste energy.

Every time the oven door is opened, the temperature inside is reduced by as much as 25 degrees, delaying the progress of your dish and, more importantly, costing you additional money. If you need to check the progress of a dish, try using the oven light instead.

Myth: Ceiling fans keep your home cool while you're away.

Believe it or not, many people think this is true. Ceiling fans cool people, not rooms. Ceiling fans circulate room air but do not change the temperature. A running ceiling fan in an empty room is only adding to your electricity use. Remember to turn fans off when you're away and reduce your energy use.

Myth: Reducing my energy use is too expensive.

Many consumers believe that reducing energy use requires expensive up-front costs, like purchasing new, more efficient appliances or construction upgrades to an older home.

But the truth is, consumers who make small changes to their energy efficiency habits, such as turning off lights when not in use, sealing air leaks and using a programmable thermostat, can see a reduction in energy consumption. Remember, energy efficiency doesn't have to be difficult. Focus on small changes to save big.

Learn more about ways to save energy by visiting www.samhouston.net.

Co-op Connections Deals



The Co-op Connections Card is a member benefit program that

delivers discounts from participating businesses, both local and nationwide. Visit www.connections.coop/samhoustonec for more deals. Could your business use free advertising? Visit www.samhouston.net, to see how you can enroll your business.

Panhead Soil

8771 Hwy 190 West
Livingston, TX 77351
936-646-2661
Hours: M-F, 8-5; Sat, 8-4
Offer: \$5 discount on purchases more than \$50.

Polk County Limo Service

1141 FM 2457
Livingston, TX 77351
936-425-5989
Hours: 24/7 limo service. "You call, we haul."
Offer: 5% discount

R.E. Appraisals

PO Box 471
Coldspring, TX 77331
281-592-1748
Hours: M-F, 9-5
Offer: \$50 discount on appraisals.

Conservation Corner



An average household dedicates about 5 percent of its energy budget to lighting. Switching to energy-efficient

lighting is one of the fastest ways to cut your energy bills.

SOURCE: ENERGY.GOV



Beware of Small Creatures After Dark



You know what happens around here on October 31: Small, strange creatures dot our roads at night. They creep up to homes with large bags and dash from one place to another, often forgetting about the cars and trucks passing them on the road.

Halloween is one of the most fun nights of the year for kids. But in their excitement,

they don't always think about safety—which means that grownups need to do some thinking for them.

If you're sending out your little ghoul or goblin to trick-or-treat, make sure they carry a flashlight. Or fasten reflective tape to their costumes to help drivers more easily see them. Remind kids to keep basic traffic rules in mind: Use sidewalks and crosswalks, and look both ways before crossing streets.

If you're doing the driving on Halloween night, keep an extra-sharp eye out. Not only can the quest for candy make kids forgetful about traffic safety, but also dark-colored costumes can make them even more difficult to see.

Sam Houston Electric Cooperative reminds you to take greater care than usual to keep Halloween a special treat for all of our small, strange creatures.

What They Do Might Shock You



You shouldn't be surprised if you see Sam Houston Electric Cooperative's line technicians repairing a downed power line or climbing a 40-foot pole to change out broken equipment—even in the worst of weather or the middle of the night. That's their job.

But you might be shocked to hear about some of the other things linemen do in the course of a day's work. They help stranded motorists. They keep a vigilant eye out for suspicious activities. They help newcomers find their way around. They participate in the activities of local teams and charities. They also save lives.

In recent years, co-op linemen in Texas have pulled people from fires, rescued them from automobile accidents and rendered aid during a heart attack. These heroic measures have garnered praise and awards—but to line technicians, it's just part of the job.

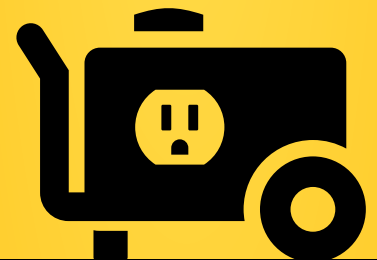
As your neighbors and fellow community members, your Cooperative's linemen always want to do their share. Even if it has nothing to do with electricity, it has everything to do with the job.

SAFETY STARTS WITH YOU

Standby generators need full-time safety.

For safety's sake, be sure to use your emergency backup generator correctly.

If you don't, you risk damaging your property and endangering your life and the lives of power line technicians who may be working some distance from your home.



Sam Houston
ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

www.samhouston.net

WINDOW ON THE PAST



SAM HOUSTON

REGIONAL LIBRARY



PHOTOS AND STORY BY RANDY MALLORY

READY TO DIG INTO LOCAL HISTORY?

HELP IS RIGHT HERE IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD AT THE SAM HOUSTON REGIONAL LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER IN LIBERTY.

When oil drilling is booming, petroleum landmen patiently peruse land ownership records. During school field trip season, fourth graders explore Texas history. Students thumb through historical documents to complete high school and college projects. Historians gather up facts on the road to qualifying for state historical markers. And families uncover ancestral roots through genealogical records. In fact, you're liable to find folks digging into the past for all kinds of reasons at the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty.

"When it comes to the history of Southeast Texas, we do it all!" says center manager Alana Inman.

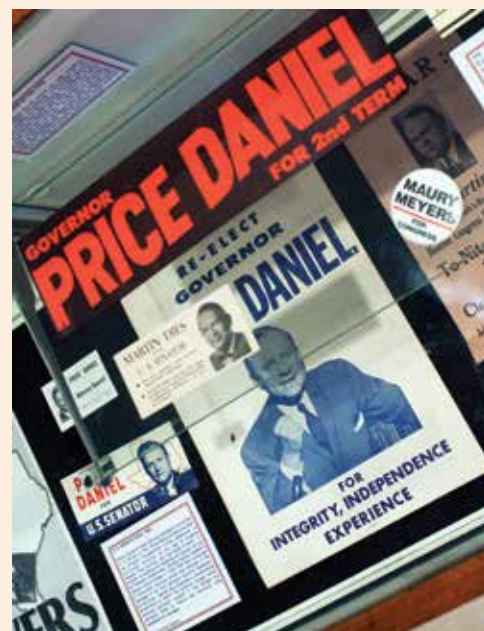
Indeed, the center is the official Regional Historical Resources Depository (RHRD) of government records and archival materials for the 10 regional counties of Chambers, Hardin, Jasper, Jefferson, Liberty, Newton, Orange, Polk, San Jacinto, and Tyler. There are 23 other RHRDs in Texas—most in academic libraries and other institutions—that house valuable historical records no longer needed by counties. The Sam Houston Center is the only RHRD owned by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission. The 17,600-square-foot center boasts a research room, public education classrooms, offices,

exhibit areas, and archival storage. The archives house volumes of government records, private manuscript collections, photographs, fine art prints, blueprints and maps, newspapers, books, and journals, plus three-dimensional Texana artifacts and genealogical resources. There are 12,000 cubic feet of historical materials which, if spread out, would cover 55 football fields, says manager Inman.

The center's main exhibit room retells regional history through displays ranging from prehistoric stone tools and Alabama-Coushatta pine needle baskets to frontier saddles and Civil War rifles. Displays of political memorabilia recall the one-of-a-kind career of Price Daniel, a Liberty County native who held more high elective and appointed offices (including U.S. representative, U.S. senator, and governor) than any other Texan.

Daniel and his wife, Jean, spearheaded the establishment of the center which was completed in 1977 using private donations. The center was named in honor of Mrs. Daniel's great-great-grandfather, Sam Houston, the first president of the Republic of Texas and later governor of the State of Texas. Filling one corner of the exhibit room is a 19th-century bedroom setting used by Sam Houston in the Governor's Mansion in Austin.

[PHOTO] Political memorabilia displays at the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center in Liberty, chronicle the careers of the region's key politicians, most notably Price Daniel, who served in more elective and appointed positions than any other Texan.





[PHOTO] Southeast Texas marriage records at the Sam Houston Regional Library prove invaluable in genealogical research.

The Daniels donated 160 acres for the Sam Houston Center on land near the 18th century Spanish settlement of Atascosito. After Texas became part of Mexico in the 1830s, this land was part of the Atascosito District which included the current 10 counties chronicled at the center. (A local group, the Atascosito Historical Society, has been a major fundraiser for the center and serves as the Friends of the Sam Houston Center.)

The Daniels also donated their home, the Jean and Price Daniel House, which sits beneath tall oaks next to the center. Patterned after the original 1850s design of the Texas Governor's Mansion, the classic home houses family heirlooms and archives. The house (as well as the center's classroom) is also available for public, non-profit educational programs and events (contact the center for details).

The center's pastoral grounds feature several other historical properties available for tours (by appointment with two weeks' notice). The Greek Revival-style 1883 Norman House illustrates domestic life of the 19th century. The 1848 Gillard-Duncan House (under renovation) is a Louisiana Creole design and one of the older homes of the region. And the one-room 1898 St. Stephen's Episcopal Church remained in continuous use in Liberty for nearly

a century before being relocated to the center. The newest addition is the 1930 Hull Rotary Building, now being restored to display and interpret local Rotary Club artifacts and archives.

WHERE THE ACTION IS

The Sam Houston Center is not a lending library. You can't check out books, manuscripts, or other research materials. But just about any of the center's myriad holdings may be viewed in the reading room, where researchers, with the help of center staff, get down to business.

"If microfilm of a document is available, you may look at that," explains reading room supervisor Darlene Mott. "Or in most cases, we will bring you the original document."

That means you could come face to face with amazing relics of the region's rich history. How about a letter written by Andrew Jackson to President Thomas Jefferson introducing Sam Houston? Or maybe a log brand book showing registered brands used by early loggers to mark timber in the same way ranchers mark cattle? Or how about the purported diary of Jean Lafitte, perhaps the most notorious of Gulf Coast pirates?

Archivist Mott spends much of her time helping patrons dig out family facts and stories. "Genealogy is not an exact science. It's a creative process where you start from what you know and work back in time. A name or date may lead to a census record, which leads to a tax roll which leads to a probate document or newspaper obituary," she explains. "That's why they call it research. You search and search and then re-search until hopefully you come up with something important."

On his genealogical search for something important, Cleveland Walters Jr. of Liberty "hit the jackpot," at the Sam Houston Center. After researching his wife's ancestors, who were slaves in Liberty County, Walters dug into his own past. His grandfather, Dick Walters, came to Liberty County in the 1890s with other "black Creoles" from Louisiana to buy land for rice and corn farming. They eventually joined an agricultural

cooperative to expand their markets. “By reading old Liberty County newspapers, I was able to fill in gaps to confirm parts of my family story,” Walters notes. “I was able to tell my dad things he didn’t know and even confirm for other relatives the names of their grandparents and great-grandparents. That’s a great feeling.”

Another regular patron, Martha Ager Goodwin of Liberty, completed two research projects by examining old newspapers in the center’s archives. She searched microfilm copies of *The Vindicator*, published in Liberty County since 1887, for information about her family home, built in 1905 by her grandfather, H.O. Ager. She was able to gather enough information to qualify the home for a Texas Historical Marker, which now graces the property. As a member of the county historical commission, she researched Liberty’s Catholic cemetery, then wrote a script used in cemetery tours to raise funds for the historical group.

“I was amazed how helpful the staff at the center was,” Mrs. Goodwin says. “People in this area really should learn about what’s available there.”

In 2017 the Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center will celebrate its 40th anniversary, explains center manager Inman. *(Check local media and visit the center’s website—www.tsl.texas.gov/shc—for details.)*

Leading up to the celebration, the center’s museum will be fully renovated, including the addition of new exhibit space for temporary displays. The entire property will be revitalized—from work on historic structures to upgraded research resources with more computers to access online resources, more microfiche readers, and better finding aids.

“We believe this revitalization effort will help people learn more about their region and their families,” Inman concludes. “It’s great to see the patrons experience those personal ‘ah-ha’ moments about the history of their families and communities. We have a great resource here that we want to make even more useful for the people of Southeast Texas.”



[PHOTO, above] Archival storage features volumes of government records no longer needed by regional counties but which retain historical significance.



[PHOTO, left] In the early decades of the region’s timber industry, loggers used brands to mark their harvested trees, similar to how ranchers use brands to mark their cattle. The center archives brand books registered in Southeast Texas.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE SAM HOUSTON CENTER

Hours: Tue-Fri, 8-5 and Sat, 9-4.

The Sam Houston Regional Library and Research Center is located three miles north of Liberty at 650 FM 1011. Call 936-336-8821 (SamHoustonCenter@tsl.texas.gov).

Researchers aged 13 to 16 may use the reading room if each youth is supervised by an adult. Children age 12 and under are not admitted unless part of an escorted group. Visitors of all ages are welcome to view the museum and tour the buildings (tours available with two weeks advance notice).

Make the most of your research time by arriving with everything you know about your research topic. Online resources, such as the Center’s website and Texas State Library and Archives Commission’s online library catalog (tsla.sirsi.net) can help. Also call ahead and talk with a Center staff member who can identify and prepare appropriate archival materials before you arrive.

When you get to the reading room, sign in at the front desk, complete a registration form, and present a valid photo ID and proof of current address. You’ll need to follow commonsense guidelines during your research session. Turn off or silence cell phones and make or receive calls only in the lobby. Store large personal items—ranging

from backpacks and camera bags to hats and coats and computer cases—in free secure lockers in an adjoining room. The Center offers restrooms and a water fountain, but foods or drinks are not allowed in the reading room and museum.

Bring along pencils (no pens) and paper to make written notes while working with documents. You may make computer notes on a personal laptop. Power cords are not allowed, so make sure the device is fully powered (recharging stations may be available).

For information found via microfilm readers, you may save the scanned images for free on a personal USB drive or make printouts for 10 cents per page. You may also take a non-flash photograph of most archival materials with your camera or smart phone, although personal scanners are not permitted.

Staff can make photocopies of most print and bound materials by request (with some exceptions based on size and condition). Copy fees range from 10 to 50 cents per page, depending on paper size. Staff will handle copy requests in the order received and usually offer same-day turnaround for 25 or fewer pages. Postage costs will be added to mailed orders. The Center accepts cash, personal checks, and money orders in payment.