

BECi Board calls for nominations by petition

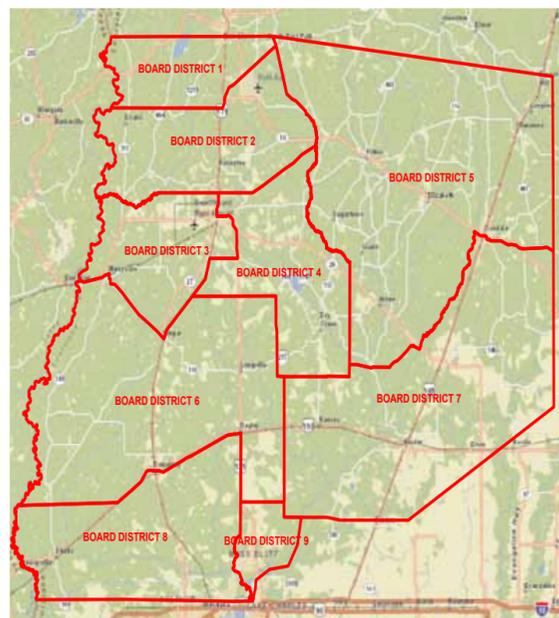
In accordance with the BECi Bylaws, the Board of Directors will approve a call for nomination by petition at the December 3, 2013. Board Meeting. The announcement is the beginning of a process for election of three (3) board members (one each from Districts 1, 3, and 9) in March 2014. Three board members will seek re-election to serve another three-year term. The current directors are Donald Bush of Leesville, District 1, J.R. Hickman of DeRidder, District 3, and L.W. "Peto" Sellers of Sulphur, District 9. The procedure and schedule for the process are as follows:

2014 Election Information

- One director to be elected in each, District 1, District 3, and District 9.
- All nominations to be by petition. Official petition forms and instructions will be available beginning December 20, 2013.
- Petitions must be delivered to the BECi DeRidder Office no later than 9:30 a.m., January 17, 2014.
- Names of nominees will be posted at BECi offices by January 23, 2014.
- Membership cut-off date to be eligible to vote is January 21, 2014.
- Ballots may be mailed no earlier than February 25, 2014 and no later than March 14, 2014. (Acct. No. 130471-002)
- Deadline to receive ballots and announcing results will be announced.
- Annual Meeting will be Saturday, March 22, 2014.

Districts 1, 3 and 9

District 1 is that portion of BECi's service territory in Vernon Parish northward of a line beginning at the Sabine River and running east along the Louisiana Base Line to U.S. Highway 171, thence north along the centerline of U.S. 171 to its intersection with La. Highway 10, thence northeast across country, such area to include all BECi members served from the north circuit of its Pickering Substation.



District 3 is that portion of BECi's service territory in Beaugard Parish lying south of the Beaugard-Vernon Parish line, and generally north of a line that begins at the Sabine River and continues east along the centerline of U.S. Highway 190 to Merryville, thence southeast along the centerline of La. Highway 110 to its intersection with the Kansas City Southern Railroad (at Singer), and west of a line that runs generally northeastward along the centerline of said railroad, eastward along the centerline of Ball Road and northward along the centerline of U.S. 171 to the Beaugard-Vernon Parish line.

District 9 is that portion of BECi's service territory in Calcasieu Parish lying south of the Beaugard and Jefferson-Davis Parish lines, east of the eastern boundary of District 8 between the Beaugard-Calcasieu Parish line and the juncture of Indian Bayou and the West Fork of the Calcasieu River, and west of a line that runs northward along the centerline of the river to its juncture with the Jefferson-Davis Parish line.

BECi News



Kevin Turner, Manager
Dale Peterson, President
Beaugard Electric Cooperative, Inc.
P.O. Drawer 970, DeRidder, LA 70634 (800-367-0275)

Former Manager Wingate stays active in retirement

Horace Wingate's biggest challenge during his nearly 20 years as general manager of BECi was also his greatest triumph.

It took plenty of political persuasion to pull off and would cost almost as much as the co-op was worth back when Wingate became manager in 1966, but laying out a plan to build 40-50 miles of 69 kv transmission line from Calcasieu Parish northward to Vernon Parish right through the heart of the most rapidly growing part of the cooperative's service area was a key component in the future success of the organization.

"I'm convinced it absolutely saved the co-op," said Wingate, now approaching 93 years old and living with his wife, Mary, just outside of DeRidder.

Shortly after Wingate was hired as manager, he had concerns about the cooperative's ability to sustain a high standard of reliability for the members and to adequately handle the load growth that was taking place.

The co-op was initially formed in 1939 by strong-willed, visionary community activists who were determined to make electrical power accessible to folks living and working in the countryside as it was already available for those residing in the cities and towns.

But by the time Wingate became manager, the member-owned co-op was facing a crossroads: update and upgrade or die.

Wingate figured that if the system wasn't expanded and improved, predatory profit-driven corporations such as Cleco to the north and Gulf States Utilities to the south would soon bring about the co-op's demise. (Acct. No. 85564-002)

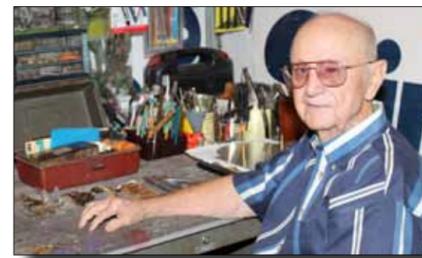
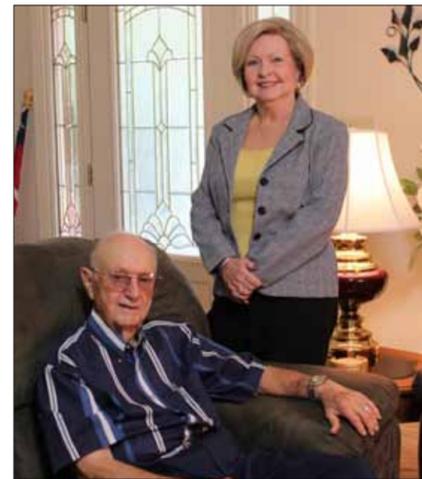
The former manager considers the transmission line project to be his crowning achievement primarily because it took such great effort to accomplish against long odds. The project wasn't an easy notion to sell to the board of directors because it was costly, would require a rate increase and would not provide an immediate and direct source of revenue.

"Transmission doesn't contribute one dime to your cash register, but you have to have it if you're going to provide reliable power," Wingate said. "I had studied engineering, distribution and transmission enough so that I knew something had to be done or there would be no BECi because the voltage was breaking. I had jacked it up with regulators and capacitors until you just couldn't do any more."

So, Wingate set about the task of convincing his board to green-light the project. He knew that one effective sales technique involves painting a vivid mental picture for the potential customer. After calling for a special board meeting, Wingate turned to a particularly obstinate



Clockwise, from above, former BECi General Manager Horace Wingate displays the first calculator owned by the cooperative, a radio dispatch speaker and a lineman's flashlight from the 1960s; Wingate is shown with Darlene Collins, who has served as executive assistant under six BECi general managers; Wingate is pictured at the desk in his shop behind his home where he spends his time repairing, restoring and building watches.



board member and used his gift of gab to describe the legions of angry consumers in the board member's district who would soon be scrambling to his doorstep to complain about all the service interruptions that were just around the corner if the status quo continued.

He described farmers upset that their water pumps had quit working and house-



wives livid over having lost the spoiled contents of their refrigerators and deep freezers.

To drive home his point, he told the board members they wouldn't have to worry about being re-elected because there wasn't going to be a board and there wasn't going to be a cooperative in the near future if the organization didn't

invest heavily in the system to deal with the deteriorating reliability problems and take the steps necessary to accommodate growth.

"I shook them up pretty good," Wingate recalled with a smile. "Finally, they told me to just do whatever it takes."

Wingate was hired as an apprentice lineman in 1946 by BECi General Manager R.I. Davis, who served as GM from 1940 to 1956.

When he came on board, the fledgling distribution co-op consisted of roughly 900 members, received its power from the Long-Bell Lumber Company and owned a single "one-lung" substation with two transformers. The work was done with two pick-up trucks and a half-ton truck for hauling poles, which were all set by hand.

He's also old enough to remember growing up without electrical power and observes that living without power was just fine - it's only in retrospect that people realized just how much easier it was to run a farm or a household or a business with the benefit of electricity. His own family didn't have power until he went to work for the co-op.

"I got the applications filled out and my Dad paid the membership fee and they finally had electricity," he said. "But when I was growing up, we got along just fine because we didn't know what we were missing. It was a lot of hard work,

but we didn't know how much easier it could be until after the power came. Man, what a difference!"

Wingate said one of the best things about working with the cooperative was one of the most difficult - the fact that the co-op was locally-owned and a key part of the community. But that led to some sticky situations when dealing with the members, who were also friends, family members and neighbors.

"A lot of people wanted me to take things and do special favors," he remembered. "I almost got fired a few times because I would extend the lines farther than was authorized by the REA just so people could get power. Mr. Davis let me know if we got caught doing that, the REA would cut off our funding. It was hard to turn people down after they'd told you how badly their family needed the power."

Today, Wingate looks back on his tenure at BECi and feels he left the co-op in better shape than when he arrived.

"Even today, BECi has one of the best physical plants of any co-op in the state. It's very well-run and the employees are first-rate," he said. "I think we were able to help a lot of people and do a lot of good things for the community while I was there. In the end, it's all about serving the community and giving people the power they need to make their lives better." (Acct. No. 10864-003)

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JUNE 13-20, 2014

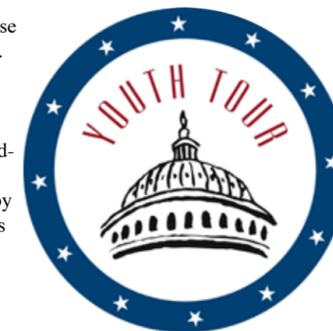
YOUTH LEADERSHIP SUMMIT - BATON ROUGE, LA.

APRIL 14-16, 2014

ESSAY CONTEST - Students must write a 300-400 word essay on "How has social media changed the way we relate to each other personally." Please do not sign the letter or place your name in the letter. Your name should only be listed on the cover sheet. Please have the letter available by email, if possible. Good luck to all and have fun writing!

JUDGING - Entries will be judged on originality, composition, neatness and grammar. Four all-expense paid trips will be awarded. Winners will travel to Washington, D.C., to join 1,500 other young people sponsored by the Rural Electrification Program. Due date is Feb. 7, 2014.

For contest rules and more information, visit www.beci.org, or call Kay Fox at 463-6221.



BECi employees complete safety training program

BECi provides its employees a comprehensive training program that covers every aspect of utility field operations, stressing safety and efficient operations under all possible conditions. (Acct. No. 99618-001)

BECi employees (shown at right, from left to right) Bentley Eddins and Matt Pendley were among linemen from electric co-ops across Louisiana who successfully completed Module 4, Levels 6-10, of the Louisiana Lineman Intensive Training Program administered by the Association of Louisiana Electric Cooperatives in Baton Rouge.



You could win \$50!!

Beaugard Electric is offering its members an opportunity to win the Co-op's Lucky Account Number Contest by publishing four account numbers somewhere on pages 6-7 of Louisiana Country. Look for your account number hidden somewhere on these pages.

To win, you must locate your account number (listed on your electric bill) on these pages and then contact the Co-op. To claim your prize, call 800-367-0275 or 463-6221 by Dec. 15.

Your Cooperative Connection

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Horace Wingate recalls days as BECi manager

Wingate and wife Mary look over old albums