



Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# Update



August 2013



## A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Dan Laws

*“We cherish the American values of this country. . .”*

As I write this, I am in our Fort Stockton office. We have just finished our monthly board meeting. As always, we were engaged in decisions that directly affect the service you receive from RGEC. The responsibility is significant; I want to assure you we never take our role flippantly. You depend on us, and we understand we must always be on our guard to ensure you get what you pay for. More importantly, that we look after your interests.

Several weeks ago, I was in Washington, DC, on business. I had some extra time, so my wife, Darlene, and I made the decision to visit Mount Vernon, George Washington’s home in Virginia. While touring his home, we had the opportunity to learn new things about him we had never known, and be reminded of things we had lost touch with. I was struck, perhaps for the first time, by his level of commitment to this country and his patriotism.

He fought with the English during the French and Indian War and was elevated to the rank of Colonel. He was 21 years old at the time. During that conflict, he saved many British lives. Subsequently, when the Revolutionary War began, he was once again called upon to take up arms and lead men in, what turned out to be, a grueling eight-year fight.

During that time, Washington returned to his home one time! Can you imagine only going home once in eight years? Although Washington had no children, he did have a nephew, whom he left in charge of his affairs while he was away at war. On one occasion, a British battleship made its way up the Chesapeake River to the Potomac River and eventually anchored adjacent to Washington’s Mount Vernon home. Out of respect for Washington, they chose not to destroy his home.

Following the incident, his nephew wrote Washington and let him know that although the British battleship had been there, they only took supplies and spared the home. Washington responded saying, “I would rather you had told me they burned Mt. Vernon to the ground.” No sacrifice was too great, no cost too high. Patriotism, I’m afraid, is lost on many Americans today. Loyalty to our flag, our freedoms, and our way of life are all too often taken for granted. Today’s American seemingly feels these things are owed to them and give no thought to the cost that was paid on their behalf, so that they could thoughtlessly wander through life believing their freedom is a birthright.

Free people remain free only so long as they never lose sight of the fact that freedom is never free! It must be valued above worldly possessions. It must be cherished like a fragile flower. It must be fought for with our dying breath, if necessary.

Following the Revolutionary War, Washington helped the Framers develop our constitution and perfect our government. He was then unanimously elected to the highest office in the land, and arguably in any land. There he served another eight years. When he left office, the American people would have gladly made him their king. He wrote a letter to the American people explaining his reason for leaving. Chief among the reasons was his simple belief that government for the people and by the people necessitated that another citizen step up and bring their ideas to the table.

We just celebrated the Fourth of July and, for me, it was wonderful. At the forefront of my celebration was my sincere thankfulness that God saw fit for me to be born in this country. I also renewed my commitment to being a patriot. Rio Grande Electric Cooperative is an American company, that does business in America. We cherish the American values of this country, our salaries and our earnings stay here in America. I encourage you to take time to read more about President Washington. You will be glad you did.