



Above, Bluebonnet's Chad Siegmund shows Christian Pratt of Ledbetter how to assemble a mini-vehicle that can roll down the road powered by solar strips. (Photo by Sarah Beal) Right, two participants at Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's fourth annual Solar Day examine the solar panels that provide power to the Eco Home on the co-op's Brenham campus. (Photo by Joe Stafford)



# All things solar

Bluebonnet's fourth Solar Day offers ideas, advice to interested homeowners

By Melissa Segrest

As if to prove a point, Bluebonnet Electric Cooperative's fourth annual Solar Day was hot and sunny – the perfect day to generate electricity from solar panels. More than 150 Bluebonnet members, employees, area residents and solar installers participated in the event, co-sponsored by the Texas Solar Energy Society and Solar Austin, on Saturday, Sept. 14, at the co-op's Brenham Service Center on Longwood Drive.

The four-hour event, broken out into two sessions, was packed with information for curious homeowners with a lot of questions about home solar arrays. Micah Jasuta, a member of the nonprofit Texas Solar Energy Society, provided a detailed presentation during each session, answering attendees' questions about how solar works, installation and more.

Bluebonnet members Judy Dickson, Margaret and Joel Shannon, and John Gardner were available to answer questions about their experience, expenses and the effectiveness of their systems.

Bluebonnet continues to see an increase in members installing solar panels on their homes and businesses. In 2019, on average, the cooperative connects one new solar member to its grid each day. By the end of 2019, the cooperative expects to have 1,045 renewable energy systems connected to its grid. With federal tax credits, which are expected to be phased out in the next few years, and the declining cost of solar panels, some can recoup the cost of their investment in less than 15 years.

Attendees could also visit with solar installers, who were hosted by the Texas Solar Energy Society.

Bluebonnet's nearby Eco Home gets a portion of its power from a 5-kilowatt solar array, a wind turbine, and underground geothermal heating and cooling system. You can find Jasuta's presentation, along with more information about harnessing the sun's power, at [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop). Click on the Energy Solutions tab, then Home Renewables & Green Energy Rate.



Watch a video about the Solar Day at [youtu.be/pOK39DD5Roi](https://youtu.be/pOK39DD5Roi) or with this story at [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop)



# Co-op board seats up for election in 2020

Bluebonnet members interested in serving on the co-op's Board of Directors can run for one of four seats up for election during the Annual Meeting on May 12, 2020.

Candidates, who would run in one of seven districts, can be nominated either by presenting an application for nomination with at least 50 signatures from co-op members in their respective districts or by paying a \$250 filing fee in certified funds.

Bluebonnet's Board is made up of nine directors who serve staggered three-year terms. The four seats up for election in 2020 are from District 3, Bastrop County; District 4, Lee, Milam and Williamson counties; District 6, Austin, Colorado and Fayette counties; and District 7, Washington County.

To run for the Board, candidates must be at least 21 years old, a co-op member

in good standing, agree to a background check and meet other qualifications outlined in Bluebonnet's bylaws, which are available at [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop). Hover your cursor over the About tab on the homepage, click on Leadership in the drop down bar and then click on the Becoming a Director link.

Application for nomination forms are available at the co-op's member service centers in Bastrop, Brenham, Giddings, Lockhart and Manor and online at [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop), under the About tab and then Reports & Forms in the drop down bar.

All candidates' petitions, filing fees and application for nomination forms must be submitted at any Bluebonnet member service center by 4 p.m. Feb. 12, 2020.

For more information, call a member service representative at 800-842-7708.



At left, Bluebonnet member Judy Dickson, center, talks with Margaret Weller, left, and Jennifer Stephenson about the benefits of adding a solar array. Below, Michah Jasuta, with the Texas Solar Energy Society, gives one of two presentations about the ins and outs of installing solar. (Photos by Sarah Beal)



## 2020 OPPORTUNITIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS IN THE BLUEBONNET SERVICE AREA

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Two high school students to tour Washington, D.C., June 17-26, 2020 — plus a \$1,000 scholarship

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: JAN. 17, 2020**

### Scholarships of Excellence

\$2,500 each to graduating high school seniors to pursue a trade and technical certificate, associate degree in a vocational field or a bachelor's degree

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: MARCH 6, 2020**

Find out more at [bluebonnet.coop](http://bluebonnet.coop) (click Community, then Scholarships) or by contacting Karen Urban at [karen.urban@bluebonnet.coop](mailto:karen.urban@bluebonnet.coop) or 512-332-7961

