



Rio Grande Electric Cooperative, Inc.

UP DATE



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A Message From The General Manager/CEO

By Daniel G. Laws

Unnecessary Christmas Baggage

Soon it will be Christmas. All the familiar sights and smells will be present everywhere you go. Christmas carols that are oh so familiar will play and we will collectively be ushered into the season of peace and good will. We will at once savor the here and now, while reliving the Christmases of times past. Similarly, we will see through the eyes of a parent or grandparent, while seeing through the eyes of a child again.

It is such a special time of year; a time when we slow everything down and examine our lives. It is a time for renewing and refreshing our lives that seem, over the course of the year, to get bogged down with unnecessary baggage. We tend to amass so many useless emotions and feelings that rob us of joy. We harbor anger over imagined wrongs, and jealousy over what others may possess or may have accomplished. In some cases, we have struck back in anger and hurt others. Sometimes, unintended victims have suffered because of our actions or reactions.

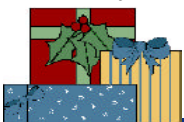
Although this unnecessary baggage does not speak well of human kind, it is at the heart of what Christmas is about. You see, Christ was born to set us free! Free from anger, jealousy, revenge and pain. His birth signaled change in the natural order of human behavior, and created the means for renewal and regeneration. Unfortunately, our opportunity for renewal didn't come freely. One song writer put it this way:

*It must have broken God's heart,
For the future He could see.
Yet He formed the hands and feet,
Knowing one day they'd be nailed to a tree.*

We can not celebrate His birth without also remembering His death.

This Christmas season you can decide to eliminate the unnecessary baggage of your life. You can forgive wrongs imagined or real, you can be glad for the blessing others enjoy, and you can choose not to strike back when wronged. This year, let the words "*peace on earth and good will toward men*" be more than just words. This year, may our actions give life to the words we so freely toss around during the Christmas season.

A preacher I once knew said, "Life may never be this way again. Those we have and hold today may be gone tomorrow. So let's make the most of today and heal our relationships." As for me, I will hold on to those things that really matter. I will spend quite time with Darlene in front of the fire; I can't imagine my life without her. Together we will share holiday cheer with friends and family. I will enjoy seeing my sons and hearing of their plans; it's still hard to believe I get to be their dad. And this year, for the very first time, I will spend a part of Christmas with my first grandchild, Jadon.



From all of us here at Rio Grande ECI, may this Christmas be filled with warmth and the New Year filled with hope.