Big Flat Electric Cooperative Youth Tour Essay

"What was the most important event to have occurred in our nation during your lifetime? How did it affect you?"

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In my life of nearly 17 years, many events happened or came to be in my world. Some important ones like the Covid Pandemic, wars in Israel and Ukraine, many school and large-event mass shootings, (even in churches), bombings and weather tragedies of fire and water and most recently, the highly political election for the presidency of the United States. The list goes on. These events caused by man and nature made impacts on me in various ways, but personally, none of these have impacted me in my brief life span as much as the technology of the cell phone with fiber optic high-speed internet. The World Wide Web is in the palm of my hand. It is ironic that the first iPhone was introduced in the year of my birth, 2007. Polls released that the growth of cell phones in the United States of America has grown from 1.4 million in 2007 to 231 million in 2024! I believe that technology has been the most important event to have occurred in my lifetime. Technology has been around for quite some time and although it didn't originate in my time, it was a world event that has advanced greatly since.

Being in such an isolated area is hard, especially when it comes to technology. We are constantly trying to get ahold of people but when you live in the middle of nowhere it can be hard. Thanks to fiber optics, we are able to have service in more distant areas. When we are moving cows and someone needs to call me, they can. Not only is the technology today a convenience but it's also a lifestyle. Being that I live on a farm and ranch, technology has helped us both in the field and the corral. Instead of waking up at four in the morning to go check cows, I can just check them on the cameras. If your dad is anything like mine, every task has to be done perfectly. When it's harvest time and I have to drive the swather, my dad can just set up the GPS so I know where to go and I don't even have to steer because I have Autosteer for that. All I have to do is sit in the seat.

I have benefited from technology in many different ways, mainly medically, educationally, and socially. It has greatly impacted my life with my singing. It helps me get my voice out there. I can record myself singing and post it online to many platforms. If it wasn't for MRI's they would have never figured out what was wrong with my knee, and I would have never gotten the chance to play sports. Today, robots are able to analyze you and find the problem. They are also able to operate on you. Speaking of sports, I am able to watch my cousins play their games live without actually being there. Instead of having to wait for the newspaper or news station on TV to hear about what is going on in the world, I can just look it up on Google or open my news app.

If we were to go back to 2019 when Covid had its outbreak, what would we have done without computers and phones? Schools shut down and if it wasn't for computers we wouldn't have been able to continue our schooling. We all had to social distance. Thanks to Zoom calls with teachers and classmates, we were able to still get some type of social interaction. We were able to receive and turn in assignments through email. The only way to see long distance friends and family was through a video call. Almost every class I have requires some sort of device to complete my schoolwork. This gives me the opportunity to get my work done easier if I am going to be gone, because all I have to bring with me is my computer instead of ten books. I also have access to higher education right at my fingertips. I can learn just about anything I want by learning it online.

Although technology has benefited us socially, it has also given us a disadvantage. We lack the ability to hold eye contact in a conversation or go out and make friends. I personally am very outgoing and don't struggle to make friends, but it is a challenge for me to talk to those whose only social skills involve their thumbs. A phone does help you make friends all over the world and help stay in touch with friends who live miles away. But when it comes down to it and we see them again in person, they aren't the same and it's hard to get two words out of them

without them looking everywhere but your eyes. Not to mention problems of arthritis, poor posture, and carpal tunnel that will plague my generation in the future!

Technology has both benefitted and hindered me. It is almost impossible to be phoneless. It's a necessity to live. A requirement. If it wasn't for technology my world would be completely different. I'm hardwired for technology, just like the rest of the world. I will forever have some type of dependency on it as well. From storing photos and videos to the "Cloud," to the many the different social networking platforms available, technology has become irreplaceable. I can apply for a job, check on family across the country, share photos with family in another state or country, check on my medical records, or simply see what shows are streaming on my Smart TV that day. Almost everyone I know has a smartphone, except for my Great Grandma Sally. If you want to get ahold of her you have to call her on a landline! To say that technology has greatly advanced in my lifetime is simply an understatement. I sometimes wonder what life would be like "back when" before all this technology, but hey, now I can just "Google it!"