

April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



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#### Mission Statement

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is committed to providing dependable, affordable electric service through the expertise and dedication of competent leadership and a well-trained and responsive workforce.

## AS I SEE IT *Manager's Viewpoint*

# Why we plan outages

**H**ave you ever received a notification from the folks here at Cumberland Electric Membership

Corporation informing you of a “planned outage?” You may have wondered, “What is a planned outage?” and, “Why does my electric utility need to perform one?” Occasionally, the equipment we use to bring power to your home needs to be replaced, repaired or updated. As a way to keep you and our crews safe, when this happens, we plan an interruption to electric service.

Doing our best to plan these outages during times when you will be least inconvenienced, we often stage these planned outages during school and business hours. We also try to avoid planning the outages during winter or summer months. We understand these are peak times of the year when you depend on running your heating and cooling units the most.

While they may sound slightly inconvenient, planned outages are actually beneficial to you, our members. Regular system upgrades are necessary for optimal performance, and they improve reliability. Repairing and upgrading our equipment are also critical to maintaining public safety. If older lines need to be replaced, we plan for the project and repair or replace the line, and that keeps everyone safe.

Planned outages also allow us to keep you informed of when and how long you will be without power. We try to notify you a few days before an outage so you can be prepared. We also keep you aware of when line crews will be working in your area.

Here at CEMC, we want to make sure we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and our system running smoothly. So, the next time you hear about a planned outage, know that it is one of the best ways we can provide you with quality electric service.



*Jim Coode,  
General Manager,  
Cumberland  
Electric Membership  
Corporation*

## Join us for Member Appreciation Days

**J**oin us at your local Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation office on these dates for free hot dogs, chips, cookies and soft drinks AND a chance to win an electric grill:

- Friday, April 8 — Dover
- Wednesday, April 13 — Springfield
- Thursday, April 14 — Gallatin AND White House
- Wednesday, April 27 — Portland
- Thursday, April 28 — Ashland City
- Friday, April 29 — Clarksville

Lunch will be served between 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. at each location. We hope to see you there!

# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund

**C**elebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, by making your home more energy-efficient.

Below are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.
3. Call Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

**3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**1** Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

**2** DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.

**3** Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

DOWNTOWN CLARKSVILLE  
**RIVERS & SPIRES**  
*Festival*  
 TENNESSEE  
 An Entity of Visit Clarksville



Country music artist Kellie Pickler will perform on the Public Square stage Saturday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m.

Rivers and Spires, the award-winning, family-friendly and always free festival, returns to historic downtown Clarksville for its 14th year this spring. The festival, which runs Thursday, April 14, through Saturday, April 16, will feature five stages of live music and entertainment, arts and crafts, great food, gaming and plenty of activities for all ages.

Headlining the event this year are country music artist and television personality Kellie Pickler and Christian recording artist and songwriter Plumb.

Pickler, who will perform on the Public Square stage at 7:30 p.m. on April 15, rose from a small-town country girl to American celebrity. You might know Kellie from the 2005 “American Idol” season where she finished sixth or from her numerous singles on the Billboard Hot Country Songs list like “I Wonder,” “Best Days of Your Life” and “Red High Heels.”

She also starred on “Dancing with the Stars” in 2013, partnering with Derek Hough. Most recently, Pickler, with songwriter husband Kyle Jacobs, stars in her own reality show, “I Love Kellie Pickler,” on CMT.

Plumb, otherwise known as Tiffany Arbuckle Lee, will perform on the Christian stage Saturday at 7 p.m. Best known as a Christian rock artist, she’s sold more than 500,000 albums and 2 million singles worldwide. Making



Christian artist Plumb will perform on the Christian stage Saturday, April 15, at 7 p.m.

inspirational music for more than a decade, Plumb has landed many singles and albums on the Billboard charts including “One Drop,” “Need You Now” and “Drifting.”

In addition to the headline performers, the three-day Rivers and Spires Festival will include a host of other local musicians and entertainers, local artists and talent competitions such as The Beaver Country Songwriter Search and Last Band Standing. The festival will also include car shows, the Festival of Nations, Quilts of the Cumberland, an arm-wrestling competition, the Military Zone, Sports Zone and the Marketplace, where a variety of vendors will be set up to sell everything from sunglasses to antiques and much more.

If you have little ones, you won’t want to miss the Family Fun Zone, which offers more than 60 free activities for the kids, including inflatables, Velcro climbing walls, painting and more. And don’t miss

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation’s own Louie the Lightning Bug in the Children’s Parade.

Hours for this year’s events are 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. on April 14 and 15 and 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. on April 16. Family Fun Zone hours are Friday, April 15, from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information about the 2016 festival and a complete listing of events, activities and performers, visit [www.riversandspires.com](http://www.riversandspires.com).

# Portland celebrates 75th Annual Strawberry Festival May 10-14

**T**he Portland Chamber of Commerce invites you to attend the 2016 Middle Tennessee Strawberry Festival Tuesday, May 10, through Saturday, May 14. The chamber has organized a fun-filled week of activities and entertainment for the whole family.

This year's event, themed "There's No Place Like Home," welcomes back previous parade grand marshals Ronnie McDowell, Mountain Man, Corey Brewer and many more. A special dinner with the grand marshals will be held May 14 at First Baptist Church. (Tickets are required for this event.)

Additional information about the 75th Annual Middle Tennessee Strawberry Festival can be found on the event's website, [www.middletennesseestrawberryfestival.com](http://www.middletennesseestrawberryfestival.com), or by calling 615-325-9032. Review this lineup of events, and make plans to join the fun:

**April 29-30:** Strawberry Pageant sponsored by Portland High School cheerleaders.

**May 10-14:** Come enjoy the Carnival fun all week long at Richland Park.



*Don't miss the free Ronnie McDowell concert and fireworks display at Richland Park on Saturday, May 14.*

**May 10 at 8 a.m.:** Annual Four-Person Golf Scramble at Kenny Perry's Country Creek Golf Course in Franklin, Ky. \$360 per team; includes barbecue lunch.

**May 11:** Strawberry Story Hour: 3:30-4:30 p.m. at the Portland Public Library.



**May 12:** Music on Main. Bring your lawn chairs and come out for a night of free entertainment Thursday night on Main Street. Music will begin at 6:30 p.m.

**May 14:** Festival Day!

- Portland Rotary Club Pancake Breakfast
- Strawberry Stride 5K Run and a fun run sponsored by Portland Athletics
- Game Stage Strawberry Eating Contest and more games begin at 9:30 a.m. (Games are free; limited space; preregistration suggested)
- Kid Town USA, where it's all about the kids. Main Street is full of inflatable jumps, obstacle courses, climbing wall and more. Play all day for \$5.
- Strawberry Jam Live Entertainment from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Market Street.
- Strawberry Lane Strawberries for sale until they are all gone. Festival T-shirts and more are also available.
- More than 100 vendors in three locations
- Parade begins at 4 p.m. (applications for entry available online).
- Grand Marshal Dinner begins at 5 p.m. at First Baptist Church. Dinner tickets are \$20, and VIP tickets are \$25 and include reserved parking and seating at the free Ronnie McDowell concert.
- Free Ronnie McDowell Concert at Richland Park at 7 p.m. Bring a lawn chair or blanket and come out to enjoy some great music.
- A fireworks display immediately follows the concert.

# Products to avoid

By Tom Tate

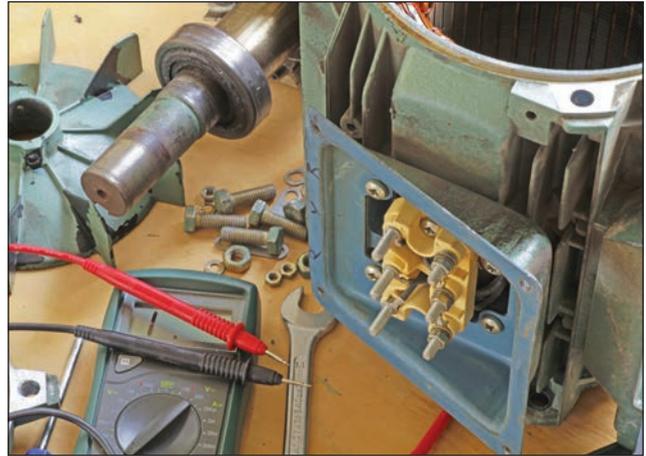
**W**hen it comes to saving energy, caveat emptor is alive and well. We are all bombarded by claims that border on outright falsehoods, so it pays to view savings claims from third parties cautiously. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.

Electric space heaters drain energy savings from your home if used incorrectly. Companies make elaborate claims about the amount of money you can save and charge exorbitant sums for their products. The advertisements frequently target those on a fixed income, presenting false hope while extracting precious dollars from their customers. I have seen a number of these space heaters and admit they appear to be well made, but they typically offer no better economy than any other 1,500-watt electric heater. Bottom line: Electric space heaters should only be used to heat small spaces — not your entire home.

Black boxes that claim to clean up power, protect appliances and reduce energy use come and go. These often require an electrician to install and claim to improve power quality, smooth out power fluctuations and store energy so you can reduce your bills. Save your money. The concepts they present are already in use by your co-op and require utility-size equipment to deliver them. Something that can fit in a shoebox is not going to deliver any value, at least not in the areas promised.

When you see the ad that reads, “The power companies don’t want you to know,” skip it. These are generally claims around building your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless “free” electricity. I would equate these with the emails I get from foreign countries telling me I can receive millions of dollars by simply sending all my banking information. At least in the case of the homemade renewables and limitless motor you get some cool plans and parts lists. You decide if it’s worth \$50 to \$200. I’ll pass.

There is a product that claims it will replace basement dehumidifiers and save tons of money. It basically is a fan system that vents all the basement air outside. Yes, dehumidifiers can be expensive to run and are a nuisance when you have to empty the water. Knowing that, I asked the Cooperative Research Network (an arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) a



*Be wary of do-it-yourself solutions to build your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store. The old adage again rings true: “If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.”*

few years ago if these products delivered on their savings claims. The experts said no. The problem is that when you blow all the basement air outside, it is replaced with conditioned air from other parts of the house, forcing your HVAC system to work harder and dramatically reducing the promised savings. Here’s my solution: I set my dehumidifier to 60 percent and run a hose to my floor drain. This resolves the water-emptying hassle and really reduces the power use while keeping my basement acceptably dry.

I will close with a warning that’s not technology-related: Scammers love to call or stop by your home, claiming they represent the local power company. Never give personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be a Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation employee without confirming his or her identity. Ask for a call-back number from the caller, then check with CEMC. Ask the door-to-door person for a valid CEMC ID. If it’s really a co-op employee, he or she will be able to prove it.

Most of us want to save energy and keep our bills manageable. Technology can help do this, but be careful. Call CEMC at 800-987-2362 before making any investments in technology that seem too good to be true. You’ll be glad you did.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# New homes with no worries

## Efficient from the ground up

By Joseph Woodard, CEMC Energy Programs Inspector

As many homeowners quickly discover, maintenance and upgrades to a home are efforts for the life of the house. The manicuring and curation of lawn and landscaping may seem never-ending. Paint and trim seem to need to change with the season. While a pink tiled bathroom may have been appreciated for style and flash in the 1960s, it may make modern homeowners feel as if they are living in a Barbie Dreamhouse (ask me how I know!).

As much as changing décor and cosmetic remodeling are part of owning a home, upgrading the efficiency of a home is as vital to comfortable living as the drapes. While all homes can benefit from upgrading in key areas such as insulation, envelope-sealing and HVAC systems, the result of such upgrades can be difficult and offer less than optimal benefit due to the home's initial construction methods. These and other factors may lead a homeowner to consider building new to truly make the house a home.

## Comfort without the cost

Choosing a contractor, procuring permits, designing and specifying materials, appliances, fixtures and more can be an overwhelming experience for the average homeowner. As important as that walk-in closet may be, ensuring that the home is being constructed to the highest level of energy efficiency can provide the longest-lasting investment. A home that costs little to operate can begin payback from the start.

## EnergyRight New Homes Program

For those planning to build a new home or who are in the construction phase, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation has partnered with the Tennessee Valley Authority to bring the EnergyRight New Homes program to our membership. The program is designed to use a prescriptive standard to follow in constructing new homes to be as efficient as possible. By specifying insulation values, HVAC design and quality and air-sealing measures, a homeowner can ensure that the operating expense can be lowered as comfort level rises.

## Upgrade for benefits

On top of energy savings gained over the life of the home, incentives are awarded for building with energy use in mind. Each home is rated with a Home Efficiency Rating System (HERS), which can measure the results of the upgrades.



A structure scoring 95-86 on a HERS index is considered an EnergyRight Home and is eligible for incentives of \$500 to the applicant. A HERS index score of 85 and below registers as an EnergyRight Platinum home, and an applicant receives an incentive of \$600!

On top of the primary incentive for the home's rating, additional \$100 incentives are offered to applicants utilizing advanced water heaters. Advanced water heating such as a heat pump/hybrid tanked system or geothermal plumbing can significantly lower baseline use and typically pays for itself in as little as two to three years.

If you are interested in participating in the EnergyRight New Homes Program, here are some things to keep in mind:

- The home must be all-electric, meaning the HVAC, water heater and cooking systems must be electric (gas logs and cooktops are allowed, as are dual-fuel heat pumps).
- You must submit a builder application, which can be found at [www.cemc.org](http://www.cemc.org).
- Once the application is received, an energy programs inspector will set up an appointment. During the inspection, the inspector will conduct a performance test of the HVAC system and verify the insulation R-values and duct system performance. Upon completion, the inspector will rate the home and process the incentives to be mailed to you!

Building for efficiency does not necessarily increase time or cost of construction. As most modern building codes have been adopted, the majority of these efficiency upgrades are already being performed. The further steps and verification through the inspection process can ensure that your family can live comfortably while saving energy dollars for years to come.



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



Flying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.





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## Caney Fork Electric Cooperative

Serving our members since 1940.

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General Manager

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**Spencer office**  
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## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

# National Lineman Appreciation Day

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day this year, so it is appropriate that we at Caney Fork

Electric Cooperative honor the hard-working men who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

The full text of the resolution for this appointed day, which the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) Board adopted unanimously, is as follows:

“Whereas linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line every day to keep the power on; Whereas linemen work 365 days a year under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair the electric infrastructure; Whereas linemen are the first responders of the electric cooperative family, getting power back on and making things safe for all after storms and accidents; and Whereas there would be no electric cooperatives without the brave men and women who comprise our corps of linemen;

“Therefore be it resolved that NRECA recognize the Second Monday of April of each year as National Lineman Appreciation Day and make available to electric cooperatives, materials and support to recognize the contributions of

these valuable men and women to America’s Electric Cooperatives.”

We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform

around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public’s safety.

Electric linemen do not often receive the recognition they deserve. They work all hours of the day, often in hazardous conditions far from their families, going above and beyond to restore power to their communities. Our linemen, as well as linemen from across the nation, truly deserve this special day of

recognition.

Thirty men maintain 3,865 miles of line in CFEC’s territory. They are the first-responders for our electric distribution system, and they work around the clock on high-voltage lines. Conditions can be very dangerous, but they power through to ensure reliable service for our members. Our system could not operate effectively without their efforts.

CFEC wants to take this opportunity to give a special thank you to our linemen for their commitment and dedication to the cooperative. We also want to invite our members to take a moment to thank the linemen for the work they do. Use #ThankALineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives.



**Bill Rogers**  
General Manager,  
Caney Fork  
Electric Cooperative

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is Friday, April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# Thank a lineman on April 11



WHEN THE LIGHTS  
GO OUT  
SO DO THEY  
#thankalinenman



Smithville



Sparta

April 11 is National Lineman Appreciation Day. Join Caney Fork Electric Cooperative as we recognize our dedicated lineworkers. Above, Smithville's linemen are, from left, Barry Vandagriff, Derrick Colwell and Andy Estes (Jim Mason is not pictured). At left, linemen working out of the Sparta office are, from left, Kyle Frazier, Marty Parker, Tyler Oaks, David Vaughn, Randy Rodgers and Scott Johnson. Below, the McMinnville line crew is, from left, Ben Brown, Toby McBride, Lynn Cantrell, Randy Roller, Brad Davenport, Ryan Lorange, Regan Kelsey, Jeff Moffitt (kneeling), George Newman, Ricky Rogers, Gary Womack, Harold Measles, Phillip Powell and David Sullivan. Not pictured: Tommy Hillis, Jason Hobbs, Hunter Sain, Kyle Thompson, Erwin Tupper and Alan Watson.



McMinnville

# In memoriam: Steve Johnson

**C**ane Fork Electric Cooperative mourns the sudden, unexpected loss of one of our very own, Steve Johnson, who passed away on Feb. 1 at the age of 53.

Steve began his career at CFEC on Nov. 12, 1990, as an engineering aide trainee. In May 1997, he was promoted to the position of director of human resources, which was his title at the time of his passing.

In reflecting on Steve's passing, CFEC General Manager Bill Rogers offered the



following thoughts: "Steve played a vital role in our organization, looking after both human resources and information technology. He was my sounding board and objective voice of reason whenever I was struggling with a tough decision. He will truly be missed."

The employees and staff of CFEC offer their deepest condolences to Steve's wife, Beth, and daughter Taylor along with all his family and friends as they remember Steve and his impact on their lives.

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## Plant a tree on Earth Day

**E**arth Day is Friday, April 22, this year, and it's the perfect day to plant a tree. Earth Day organizers encourage everyone to plant trees wherever they can: in parks, in their neighborhoods or in their own yards.

If you plant a tree in your yard, choose a strategic location that will allow the tree to shade your home from the hot summer sun. As it grows, the tree will help reduce your air-conditioning bills and keep your home more comfortable.

Some tips from the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees on the west and northwest sides of your home will shade the building during mid- to late afternoons.
- Keep branches pruned enough that they don't block your view when you look out of west-facing windows.
- Shade trees along driveways and patios will keep you cooler while you're outside. The shade keeps the concrete and your yard cooler.
- Protect your outdoor air-conditioning unit from weather-related wear and tear by planting a shade tree nearby. The less direct sunlight that hits the unit, the more efficiently it will run all summer.

# Member Appreciation Days coming in May

**S**pring is here, and that means it is almost time for Member Appreciation Days at Caney Fork Electric Cooperative. This May, CFEC will once again host events at all cooperative offices.

Make plans to join us for food, prizes, activities for the kids and a guest appearance by Louie the Lightning Bug.

Mark your calendars for the dates below to take part in CFEC's Member Appreciation Days:

- *Sparta office*  
*Tuesday, May 24*
- *Smithville office*  
*Wednesday, May 25*
- *Spencer office*  
*Thursday, May 26*
- *McMinnville office*  
*Friday, May 27*



Louie the Lightning Bug and his friends invite you to attend Member Appreciation Day in May at your local CFEC office.

# Ricky Rogers retires from cooperative

By Angel Wood, CFEC Communications Coordinator

Following 30 years of dedicated service to our membership, lineman Ricky Rogers retired from Caney Fork Electric Cooperative at the end of March.

Ricky began his career with CFEC in 1974 as a groundman and began working his way up to apprentice lineman. Four years after his first stint with the cooperative, he decided to go back to farming full time. In June of 1990, Ricky returned to CFEC to finish what he'd started, becoming a lineman, which was the title he would hold until his retirement.

Born and raised with sisters Pam and Tammy on a farm in Morrison, Ricky was the only son of Leslie and Wilma Rogers. He graduated from Warren County High School in 1972 and afterward attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga for one year before beginning his career as a lineman.

Married in 1974, Ricky and his wife, Marsha, reside in Morrison and are members of First Baptist Church in McMinnville. They are the proud parents of a daughter, Sally, and a son, Glenn. Ricky loves fishing, hunting, gardening,



Ricky Rogers

and watching ballgames, especially baseball.

When we talked about Ricky's career at the cooperative, he said, "I have had a lot of good experiences and some not-so-good ones. I have met a lot of good people. I really can't complain about any of my days. God has been good to me."

I asked Ricky what he would be doing with his time after retirement, and he said, "I just want to enjoy life and hope to stay healthy. I am going to take one day at a time and enjoy whatever the good Lord lets me do."

Thank you, Ricky, for your loyalty and service to Caney Fork Electric Cooperative. We hope you enjoy your retirement and that every day is a blessing to you and your family!

*Ricky during his earlier years at the cooperative.*



## Tamper-resistant receptacles are permanent safety solutions

Nearly seven children a day are shocked or burned when they slide keys, pins, paper clips and other small objects into electrical outlets in their homes, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Up to a dozen of them die each year.

That means each room in your house that has an electrical outlet — and that's probably every single room — presents a danger to your children. It costs about \$2 per outlet to replace your old ones with

updated, tamper-resistant versions designed with a built-in shutter system that prevents objects from entering the slots. Plugs can still fit into the slots, however, when equal pressure is applied to both sides.

Tamper-resistant receptacles are safer than removable outlet caps because children are unable to detach them.

The National Electrical Code requires new homes to come with tamper-resistant receptacles, but it's up to the owners of older homes to upgrade their outlets.

# Co-op welcomes new employee

**C**aney Fork Electric Cooperative announces the hiring of Ben Brown as an apprentice lineman. He comes to the cooperative as an installer and repair technician from DeKalb Telephone (DTC), where he worked for eight years.

Brown is a 2002 graduate of Warren County High School. He enjoys hunting, fishing, four-wheeling, and kayaking. Brown is a member of First Baptist Church in McMinnville and also attends Charles Creek Baptist Church.

When asked why he wanted to work for Caney Fork Electric Cooperative, Brown spoke of how he enjoyed his days as an apprentice lineman at Pike Electric: “I made the decision to work for DTC to be closer to home. I am looking forward to getting back into line work and the new opportunities ahead with the cooperative.”



---

# Job shadow day at cooperative



*Morrison eighth-grader Haven Davis, daughter of Shea Muncey and Shaddon Davis, job-shadows Kristy Sparkman, CFEC engineering and operations secretary.*

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#### Sparta area

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931-836-2118

Caribbean Cafe  
931-836-1550

The Co-op Connections Card is free to all CFEC members. Obtain your card at any CFEC office.

If you are a business owner who would like to be part of this exciting program or you frequent a business you'd like to refer, call 931-473-3116 or email awood@caneyforkec.com for additional information.

# Co-op Connections Program Featured Businesses



Photograph by Kevin Vaughan

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## AS I SEE IT *Michael's Viewpoint*

### Employees at the helm of DREMC safety ship

Some of the greatest product innovations and safety advances have been the result of employees seeing a better way to do things. Case in point is a 3M product used around the world.

In 1968, a failed attempt to create a super-strong paper adhesive instead resulted in a “low-tack,” reusable, sticky medium that was pressure-sensitive but left no residue when removed. The inventor, Dr. Spencer Silver, spent six years trying to convince 3-M officials that the adhesive had commercial value. He made little progress.

Enter fellow employee Art Fry, who needed bookmarks for his church hymn book that would stay in place. Using Spencer’s low-tack adhesive on pieces of scrap paper — bright yellow, as it turned out — Fry helped open the door for 3M’s iconic Post-it Note®. By 1990, Post-It Notes ranked among the top five U.S. office products, all because employees refused to give up on an idea.

The same thing happens when employees take ownership of workplace safety. Here at Duck River EMC, teams of employees have embraced the Zero-Incident Performance (ZIP) program, developed by Caterpillar Safety Services. ZIP is beginning to see adoption in the electric utility industry. In fact, DREMC is among the first electric co-ops in the Tennessee Valley Authority region to implement ZIP — the goal of which is “zero injury accidents.”

Admittedly, saying you’re going to eliminate on-the-job injuries is easy. Getting it done? Well, this is something else entirely. ZIP is only possible through development of a safety culture in which everyone takes responsibility for themselves and their fellow workers. This is our goal.

DREMC already has an outstanding safety culture. Many electric utilities would love to be where we are today. But with ZIP, our employees are stepping things up several notches by identifying areas of strength and weakness, then taking on safety improvement projects that will make a difference.

We have two basic employee groups: the Safety Steering Team, which has been trained to strategically focus on problems and find ways to bring resources to bear, and the Continuous Improvement Team, which uses those resources to find and implement solutions.

These teams include a mix of inside and outside hourly employees, a few mid-level managers and a smattering of staff. I have pledged whatever support the teams require to get the safety improvement job done, but DREMC employees are in the driver’s seat.

Why should this be important to DREMC members? I believe those we serve also appreciate the contribution of our linemen and other employees in keeping the lights on and electric bills affordable. Time and again during power outages caused by ice and wind storms, co-op members have cheered our line crews and support personnel, thanking them and urging them to be safe as they work to restore service.

When DREMC works safely, men and women go home to their families at the end of the day. This is my No. 1 goal. But prioritizing safety also makes DREMC more efficient overall, reduces costs and eventually translates to lower electric rates. An employee-driven culture of safety is the only way to achieve zero-incident performance. This is why I expect great things from our new safety program.



*Michael Watson*  
*Duck River EMC*  
*President/CEO*

# Spring electricity rates begin in April

**A**pril and May are included in the Tennessee Valley Authority spring transition rate structure. During these months, per-kilowatt-hour charges decrease in relationship to the summer and winter months.

TVA's cost to produce electricity decreases as demand during the moderate-temperature months reduces typical use and requires less peak production of power. DREMC

passes these wholesale rate fluctuations, both up and down, on to our members.

DREMC offers energy-efficiency initiatives to assist members. Visit [www.dremc.com](http://www.dremc.com) for energy-saving tips and to learn about our eScore program through which members make energy-efficiency upgrades, receive rebates and possibly qualify for low-interest loans. Call 931-680-5883 for more information on these programs.

## Clements joins DREMC Headquarters as staff IT analyst



Annie Clements

**D**uck River EMC is proud to welcome Annie Clements to the Operations Department as its information technology (IT) analyst. Clements will provide information technology analytical and technical support services. She will be responsible for generating database queries that will help DREMC understand many different job processes. This includes working closely with all departments to provide applications to support the effective use of technology; analyze and solve organizational information problems; provide data analysis, retrieval and database support for operational and application needs; and analyze business and data requirements.

A Middle Tennessee State University graduate, Clements grew up across the nation. Her father was an Air Force major, and she has lived in Alaska, New Mexico, Colorado, Texas and Ohio.

Most recently she was the IT business analyst/developer for the Aerospace Testing Alliance at Arnold Air Force Base.

A lover of theater, Clements performs regularly in area productions. She and her husband reside in Tullahoma.

## Are you ready to celebrate?

Duck River EMC is 80 this year and you're invited to an anniversary party at the Columbia DREMC office from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. on April 15. Members will receive hot dogs, popcorn and drinks. Meet our employees, learn about our many services and see a high voltage safety demonstration. We can't wait to see you there. Each office will have an anniversary party. See the next issue of The Tennessee Magazine for a complete listing of the dates.



A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

## Stay Connected

Visit our social media outlets to get the latest information on energy tips, program updates, important community events and outage information.



# 80 years down the line ... Mule power helped build electric co-ops

Mules and electric cooperatives enjoy a long, unique relationship. In the case of Duck River EMC, mules provided much of the early “power” to build a distribution system that today serves more than 72,000 members in a 16-county area of southern Middle Tennessee. Theirs was muscle power, of course.

In the mid-1930s, mules and horses possessed the heavy lifting and dragging capability needed to haul and erect utility poles in terrain where good roads were lacking and construction materials often had to be transported by wagon.

Back then, electric lines were strung following the shortest distance between two points. This meant many original circuits and taps went over hill and dale, bluffs, rivers and swamps, up mountains and down the other side. Sure-footed, hard-working mules fit the bill for those pioneering co-op members and employees building their own utility.

Mules could go where trucks couldn't, and they worked for hay. Farmers often loaned out their stock to the Rural Electrification Administration (REA) construction crews. Or they boarded the mules and horses that workers brought to the job, ensuring the animals received hearty feedings of grain and water at the end of the day.

My grandfather's blind white mule, Sookie, was contracted out to the REA, according to family legend. So were my teen-aged uncles because working a blind mule takes a certain talent.

Sookie didn't let disability affect her work. She could do about anything in the pulling department, whether it was snaking logs out of the timber woods or utility poles through saw-briar bottoms. She depended on verbal orders, of course,

but she had a bad habit. She had an internal clock that told her when to go to the barn. She could unerringly get there by memory and smell. Many were the times when construction workers saw the white mule do an about-face and head homeward, dragging a creosote pole.

Trucks and wagons full of poles, wires, rigging, tools and men kept the construction going. To hold down costs, REA standardized the materials and installation process. Teams of specialists did one part of the pole-setting and line erection job, followed by other crews that focused on different tasks until the span was built. Depending on terrain, up to four miles of line could be completed per day.

Crews had to be kept supplied or the pace of construction would slow. Experienced muleskinners could earn good wages hiring out teams. The mule handlers who earned the most transported dynamite. The birth of electric cooperatives in much of Appalachia, the Ozarks and western mountain chains required an inordinate amount of explosives — and the

people who knew how to set off blasts.

Rock was the bane of pole-setters. Dynamite was the solution. But few wanted the job of hauling the stuff. In 2010, I interviewed a former REA muleskinner who not only drove the dynamite wagon, but he also set the charges and cut the fuses. He said no one wanted to be near the dynamite wagon, so the mules were often his only company.

Mules were still helping electric co-ops into the 1950s. A search of the DREMC archives produced the vintage photo on this page. No identifying information was appended except the date: 1951. So we can speculate that well into the mid-20th century, mules were hard at work, helping turn on the lights in rural areas.



*Mules helped pull electric lines and drag poles into position during the electrification of rural America from the 1930s to the 1950s. This photo, dated 1951, came from the DREMC archives.*

# Taking the reins at Mule Day

Anita King is the first woman to become mule pull director

Everyone attending the festivities at Mule Day in Maury County has no doubt heard Anita King's voice over the loud speaker during the pulling competitions. A Duck River EMC member, King is the first woman to serve as the mule pull director, hooking her reins to one of the annual event's most popular features.

Mule Day has been a treasured tradition in Columbia, the county seat, since the 1840s. Originally called Breeder's Day, the event was a livestock show and mule market held on the first Monday in April. Today, Mule Day attracts equine enthusiasts and spectators from across the nation, drawing crowds of more than 200,000.

Mules have always been a big part of King's life. Her father, Fred Lancaster, was extremely active in mule-pulling contests throughout the Southeast. Anita King, who has been going to mule pulls since she was 5 years old, even met her late husband, W.E. King, at an event.

W. E. logged with his team of mules through the week and on the weekends went to mule pullings across Maury County. Anita and W.E. traveled throughout the South for years, competing and winning at mule pullings. She has participated in pulling events but mainly handled the announcing and bookkeeping. The couple had been married 39 years when W.E. passed away in 2014.

In 2003, Jerry Erwin, also a DREMC member, asked King if she could handle being director of the pulling competition at Mule Day. Thirteen years later, she's still

pull director. Her responsibilities include recruiting judges, planning pulls, inviting pullers to the events, presenting ribbons to the winners, ordering winners' jackets and serving as announcer.

"I have been around mules and pullings for decades," says King. "I love Mule Day and the people who are a part of it. After Mule Day is over, we are figuring out the dates for the next pull."

King's granddaughter and niece are assistant directors of the mule pull.

Shena Speck, King's niece, also met her husband at a mule pulling.

"I have learned so much from Anita over the years," says Speck. "She taught me to always keep my harness clean. She said that if we didn't win, at least we'd have the best-looking team out there."

This year's Mule Day schedule of events starts on March 28 with the departure of the

wagon train. The mule pullings are held at the Maury County Park at 6 p.m. on Thursday, March 31. This year's event will feature an old-fashioned log-pulling competition. King was instrumental in making this a class.

The gaited-mule show and pony mule-pulling begin at 6 p.m. on Friday, April 1.

The parade starts at 11 a.m. on Saturday, April 2, in downtown Columbia. The mule pullings begin again at 2 p.m.

For more information about Mule Day, visit [muleday.org](http://muleday.org).



*The late W.E. King and wife Anita pose with mules Jack and Buck. Anita is the first woman to be mule pull director for Mule Day celebration in Columbia.*

# What's Your E-Score?

By DREMC Consumer  
Information Specialist  
Connie Potts



Bonnie and Jim Wilson of Franklin County listen as Pat Garrett, DREMC Residential Energy Advisor, right, inputs information about their home into his electronic device.

Before reading further, please complete this brief quiz about your household energy use:

1. Do you dread receiving electric bills for winter heating and summer air-conditioning?
2. Does it seem uncomfortably cold or hot inside your home despite the HVAC system running constantly?
3. Do your appliances carry Energy Star® certification labels?

If you answered “Yes” to the first two questions and “No” to the last, you could be a prime candidate for a program from Duck River EMC and the Tennessee Valley Authority that makes it easier than ever to reduce electric bills and increase household comfort levels. It’s called eScore, and the goal is to improve residential energy efficiency.

The basis of eScore is an online, do-it-yourself evaluation to determine how energy-efficient your home is. This could lead to a professional energy audit, eligibility for rebates and access to low-interest financing for equipment and installation performed by a network of TVA-qualified contractors.

DREMC member Kurt Duncan, who set up his eScore account using an iPad, said the entire process went flawlessly.

“I am a firm believer in the service industry,” says Duncan, “and all the contractors involved in the process showed up when they were supposed to and completed the necessary work in a timely manner.”

The Duncans began noticing their 16-year-old Maury County home wasn’t as comfortable as it once was. “Our windows always leaked depending on which way the wind blew,” Duncan recalls. “When we

started getting our windows replaced, our window contractor recommended the program to us.”

When members create their profiles online at [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com), they can request an evaluation or choose an approved contractor.

All onsite home energy audits are performed by DREMC Residential Energy Advisor Pat Garrett. Most audits take approximately two hours to complete. Garrett walks the homeowner through the process, explaining exactly what he is looking for as he inspects the home.

The first order of business is to check all the appliances to see if they are Energy Star®-rated. This reflects the energy efficiency of the units.

Next, it’s up into the attic to check insulation levels. Over time, insulation settles or can be trampled down, losing effectiveness. Adding insulation in the attic is an

economical way to increase whole-home energy efficiency.

Garrett doesn’t leave the residence without squeezing his way underneath the house to check the ductwork for leaks, rodent holes or moisture problems. These are areas that homeowners normally do not inspect on a regular basis, but faulty ductwork is a major cause of high electric bills.

“Poor attic insulation and leaky ductwork are among the most common problems I see,” Garrett adds.

Joyce Tabor of Estill Springs contacted DREMC about her house

being cold all winter. An energy audit was conducted, and an eScore account was set up for Ms. Tabor. Additional insulation was recommended.



Attic rulers measure the R-value of the insulation. This is one of the things Garrett looks for when he performs his energy audits.

“I had no idea what the insulation levels were up there. If it wasn’t for Pat Garrett, I wouldn’t have known what I needed,” says Tabor.

Jean Toborg of Franklin County was unaware of issues with her attic insulation and HVAC system until she contacted DREMC for an audit through the eScore program.

“I just knew the house wasn’t as comfortable as it should have been,” says Toborg. “Pat did a thorough inspection. I was able to get the work done that I needed, and my house is comfortable again.”

Co-op member Michael Lamas of Coffee County took advantage of the



*Jean Toborg stands beside the heat pump she had installed after participating in the eScore program.*



*Garrett shows a homeowner a section of ductwork that was improperly installed.*

eScore program after having good results with another utility provider in his former home. New windows and attic insulation greatly improved structural energy efficiency. He even went one step further and is replacing all of his lightbulbs with LEDs.

After Garrett completes his inspection and uploads the findings into a software program, the homeowner is able to review the report (usually the same day), learn the eScore total and plan what measures to pursue. Most of the homes Garrett inspects score 6 or 7 out of 10, indicating a need for energy-efficiency improvements.

“You can be living in a brand new house, but if everything isn’t installed with energy efficiency in mind, your home may not be as comfortable and efficient as it should be,” he adds.

DREMC has paid approximately \$140,000 in rebate money to some 450 members since the eScore program launched in 2014.

## How eScore works

Go to [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com) to create your profile. The home must be an existing single-family, owner-occupied dwelling served by DREMC and must have had permanent electric service for a minimum of one year prior to the evaluation.

Participants can request an evaluation or go directly to an approved contractor. If an evaluation is requested, an upfront fee of \$150 will be charged. An energy auditor will visit your home and create a report outlining the potential modifications and available cash incentives.

A follow-up visit is made to inspect the improvements once they are completed.

The \$150 fee is reimbursed when the approved work has been completed or inspected.

All modifications must be made by a member of the TVA Quality Contractor Network (QCN). The QCN member must upload all the required invoices to [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com) before the final inspection can be completed.

Not all measures can be financed. Loans must be pre-approved before work starts. Maximum value of a loan is \$15,000, and loan eligibility is based on a credit score and other factors.

For more information about eScore, visit [www.dremc.com](http://www.dremc.com) or call Helen Blanton at 931-680-5883. She is happy to assist members interested in the program.

## Eligible improvements include:

- Heat pumps — dual fuel and geothermal — and gas furnaces (all must be Energy Star®-rated)
- Attic insulation
- Water heater insulation
- Air-sealing
- HVAC tune-up
- Replacement windows
- Ductwork replacement or repair
- Storm windows

By DREMC Member Relations Specialist Claire Sellers

# Heroes on the LINES

**T**hey are the unsung heroes whose work is often under-appreciated because, if they do it well, no one realizes the job's importance and danger. That the lights stay on is often taken for granted. But years of training and on-the-job experience are required of the line crews responsible for an electric distribution system spanning 16 counties and serving more than 72,000 members.

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation members don't routinely see the 53 linemen who climb the poles and work from fiberglass buckets at the end of hydraulic booms. But every day in rain, snow and searing sun, these men keep the electricity flowing to homes, farms and businesses.

They work in dangerous settings where contact with high voltage could maim or kill. Following natural disasters, they toil in difficult conditions and get little rest. But they're proud to be electric co-op linemen.

April 11 is National Linemen Appreciation Day, and DREMC wants co-op members to help honor the men who work on the lines and poles. The celebration includes an art contest among fourth-graders across the service area, a meal

for the linemen where appreciation cards from members will be distributed and special recognition via DREMC's social media sites through the #thankalinemanTN campaign. Photos of the line crews as well as videos will be featured.

DREMC has come a long way in the past 80 years. As you learned on page 22, mules were instrumental in building DREMC's infrastructure. Mules helped linemen move equipment and poles across the service area when the circuits were built.

Over the years, technology has made the job of a lineman much easier. But the work is still hard and dangerous — and, yes, DREMC linemen still don climbing gear to shimmy up utility poles to equipment that can't be reached from bucket trucks.

DREMC's dedication to providing safe, reliable electricity rests squarely on the shoulders of these men in hard hats and flame-retardant clothing.

If you know any linemen, be sure to thank them for what they do. They are the backbone of electric cooperatives, and we are proud to honor them on April 11.



Duck River EMC's Moore County Linemen



Duck River EMC's Bedford County Linemen



Duck River EMC's Marshall County Linemen



Duck River EMC's Maury County Linemen



Duck River EMC's Coffee County Linemen



Duck River EMC's Franklin County Linemen

## Duck River Electric Membership Corporation

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation is celebrating 80 years of light in 2016. Visit our local pages to see when member appreciation events will be held in your district. We are calling the events anniversary parties this year in celebration of 80 years of light! Follow us on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn to keep up with the exciting things we are doing. Each month we feature a different then and now banner on Twitter and Facebook.



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# Spotlighting dedication

The work that Fayetteville Public Utilities' employees do may sometimes go unnoticed, but in reality, it's a vital part of our daily lives. From installing a new gas or water line extension to upgrading miles of electric line, our employees in all departments work hard to keep the lights on, the gas and water flowing and the telecom services available to you at the flip of a switch, turn of a knob or push of a button.

On an average day, our jobs are pretty routine in the utility industry. But it's on those occasions when severe weather threatens service reliability or when there are other outages beyond our control that we see the added value of FPU's dedicated work force.

That being said, FPU and its employees take part in two national recognition days established by the natural gas and electric utility industries: Natural Gas Utility Workers' Day (NGUWD) and National Lineman Appreciation Day.

This year was the inaugural recognition for the NGUWD as FPU's Natural Gas Department employees were honored for the services they provide our community. On March 18, natural gas employees across the U.S. reflected on their accomplishments and how customer safety was enhanced with the widespread odorization of natural gas to make leaks easily detectable.

Today, natural gas is one of the safest forms of energy supplied nationwide, and it's those who work in the industry we thank for their service and safe work habits.

The electric cooperatives across the nation have designated the second

Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. On April 11, FPU will join other rural electric systems in honoring the dedicated employees who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on.

During emergency outages, linemen leave their families and put their lives on the line to restore power. Many times linemen work under dangerous conditions to build, maintain and repair electric infrastructure. They serve as FPU's first responders during outages, getting power back on and making things safe again for all.

FPU appreciates all of our employees for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power, natural



Britt Dye  
CEO/General Manager

gas, water, wastewater and telecom services flowing and protect the public's safety.

You depend on FPU to be there every day to provide reliable, affordable, safe utility services, and it's our job to be there when you need us.

The employees never ask for extra appreciation for what they do, and many times they do not receive the recognition they deserve. For these reasons and others, we wish to publicly thank them in this issue of *The Tennessee Magazine* for the work they do.

We also invite you to join us in honoring the electric linemen at Fayetteville Public Utilities on April 11 during National Lineman Appreciation Day. Take a moment to send a note of thanks on social media using #ThankaLineman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives, not only here at home, but across America.



Construction of FPU's new administration building begins

## A building for the future

**C**onstruction of Fayetteville Public Utilities' building expansion and renovation project is well underway as crews have leveled the lot behind the utility's current location and as FPU's own construction crews have begun building utility infrastructure to serve the new addition.

"This has been a long-planned-for venture for FPU," says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. "We have needed the office space and enhanced customer and employee security for quite some time."

The construction project includes renovations to FPU's existing facility and office expansions — all funded by FPU's ability to set aside reserve funds over the years to invest in the project, eliminating the need for borrowing additional money to pay for the construction.

Plans include improved customer service areas to adequately accommodate utility customers' privacy and other administrative concerns under the Federal Trade Commission's Identity Theft Policy (Red Flag Rule), which the FPU board of directors adopted in 2008. Plans also include relocation of some offices to eliminate the continued use of areas originally designed and used for material and file storage and telecom headend operations.

The new facility will include a dedicated room for Channel 6 productions and a room large enough to accommodate all of FPU's employees for training and meetings.



*As with any new utility construction, FPU's own water, electric and telecom crews will install utilities to the new administration building. Here, water crews dig the trench for the a new 6-inch water line.*

As construction progresses over the following months, FPU reminds customers to use extreme caution when visiting its office as construction materials, equipment and crews will be on site and near the utility's drive-through and customer parking area. Also be aware of any possible road or lane closures along North Bellview Avenue and West Market Street, which border the construction site.

Construction began Dec. 21. At that time, FPU estimated the project could take more than a year to complete.

## FPU recognized as Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador

Fayetteville Public Utilities was recently recognized as an Ambassador for a Weather-Ready Nation by the National Weather Service in Huntsville, Alabama. The Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador initiative is an effort by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to formally recognize its partners who are improving the nation's readiness, responsiveness and overall resilience against extreme weather, water and climate events.

"Severe weather has a direct effect on the services we provide," says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. "Tornadoes, ice storms and flooding are major weather events for which all FPU employees are trained and well equipped to handle. During weather events such as these, we work closely with local emergency responders and the local media to assist our community."

According to Tim Troutman with the National Weather Service in Huntsville, more than 90 percent of all presidentially declared disasters are weather-related and claim as many as 500 lives per year and cause nearly \$14 billion in damage. To help guard against severe weather, the National Weather Service has designed the

Weather-Ready Nation initiative to strengthen partnerships that promote local community preparedness and responsiveness against extreme weather events.

Building a Weather-Ready Nation requires participants to encourage others to heed weather warnings, take action and inform the public of potential weather-related risks when watches and warnings are issued.

"Many years ago, FPU established an action plan to

navigate our severe weather response," says Dye. "We continue to educate our employees on a regular basis about workplace preparedness. When FPU is prepared, our customers benefit from our ability to respond quickly to utility outages."

FPU was recognized as a Storm-Ready Supporter by the National Weather Service in August 2008. Storm-Ready Supporter designation recognizes organizations that better prepare themselves for

severe weather and actively receive and disseminate severe-weather warnings from the National Weather Service. At that time, FPU also launched a campaign encouraging local residents to purchase weather radios to receive alerts and severe-weather warnings for our area.



*FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye, left, is presented the Weather-Ready Nation Ambassador certification by Tim Troutman of the National Weather Service, Huntsville.*

## eScore advances home energy savings, offers rebates

The eScore program is a home improvement offer from the Tennessee Valley Authority and Fayetteville Public Utilities that provides a simple path to making your home as energy-efficient as possible to save energy and money.

Getting started is easy. Just follow these steps:

1. Register online or over the phone. Visit [www.2eScore.com](http://www.2eScore.com) or call 1-855-2eScore (1-855-237-2673) to enroll in the program.
2. Contact a Quality Contractor Network (QCN) member to begin the work you want to do. A list of QCN members is available on the eScore website or can be given to you over the phone. The QCN member can discuss options, rebates and program details with you.
3. Get a FREE quality assurance inspection and an eScore evaluation of your home. A TVA-certified energy

advisor will evaluate your home to assess your current eScore rating. The advisor will give you a list of improvements to raise your home's eScore energy rating, install instant energy-saving upgrades and provide access to more rebates to help make your home as energy-efficient as possible.

The eScore program can assist with attic and wall insulation, duct systems, lighting, appliances, water heaters, air sealing and heating/cooling systems. It's your choice whether you complete improvements in all areas or just one. Remember, each step taken to improve your home's energy efficiency moves you closer to the perfect eScore of 10.



# NEW from Fayetteville Public Utilities!

# smarthub

Taking utility payments to the next level



**S**martHub is the new electronic payment service that gives Fayetteville Public Utilities customers another level of convenience for paying utility bills and accessing account information anytime, anywhere.

With SmartHub, you can manage many aspects of your FPU account via computer, smartphone or tablet. SmartHub makes utility payments simple and gives you access to historical utility use information, which helps you make decisions about how to use your utilities during peak seasons.

SmartHub is a free service offered by FPU. The SmartHub app is available for mobile devices (iPhone, iPad, iPod or Android device) as a free download. Simply look for SmartHub in the Apple Store or in the Google Play Store.

Signing up via the Web using your home computer is also easy. From your laptop or desktop computer, visit FPU's website at [www.fpu-tn.com](http://www.fpu-tn.com) and click the SmartHub icon on the right side of our homepage. Step-by-step directions are linked on the page to help you create a new account. After creating your account, you can access your utility use, pay bills and more using SmartHub.

Several tutorial links are available on FPU's website at [www.fpu-tn.com](http://www.fpu-tn.com) to assist new SmartHub users with making payments and accessing account information. If you

need further assistance, please speak with an FPU customer service representative.

Because SmartHub gives you easy electronic access to your FPU billing, payment and account information, if you wish to completely go "paperless" with your FPU utility account, simply sign

FPU's Electronic Notice Form.

With paperless billing, FPU will

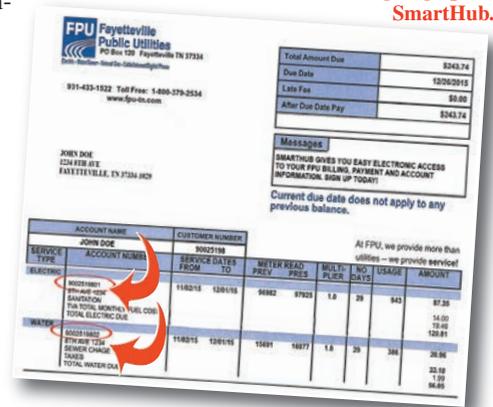
only send billing information to your

computer and mobile device; you

will no longer receive a printed billing statement or late notice in the mail.

Sign up today and see how convenient paying your utility bill can be using FPU's SmartHub!

**Please use your FPU account number when signing up for SmartHub.**



## FPU releases 2015 Water Quality Report

**E**ach year, Fayetteville Public Utilities Water Department reports the results of our water quality testing as a provision under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1996. This report provides our customers and community with scientific data that confirms the safety of the water supplied by FPU's Water Department.

FPU performs routine tests on water leaving the plant as well as water traveling through our distribution system to ensure your drinking water meets all chemical, radiological and bacteriological water quality standards established by the Environmental Protection Agency.

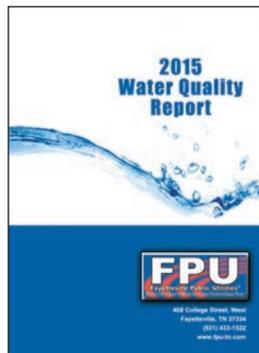
Your FPU water system maintains 142 miles of water lines. Water is collected from our main source of water, the Elk River. Water is treated at the FPU Water Treat-

ment Plant on Eldad Road and then stored in a clearwell at the plant facility. From there, it is distributed to four reservoirs throughout FPU's service area. Combined, these water storage facilities have a total capacity of 4.69 million gallons of treated drinking water. On average, FPU pumps 2.26 million gallons of drinking water per day from the treatment plant to our customers for consumption and other uses.

Learn more about the operation as well as filtration and purification of your drinking water in the 2015 Water Quality Report, now available online at [www.fpunet.com/wq15.pdf](http://www.fpunet.com/wq15.pdf).

Paper versions of the report are also available at the FPU office or by calling 931-433-1522.

Please review the report as it contains important information about water quality supplied by FPU.



# Natural gas tie line improves system reliability

**W**ith service reliability at the forefront, Fayetteville Public Utilities works to further enhance its natural gas service in the southeast portion of Lincoln County while expanding service availability to customers in the area.

At the beginning of the year, contractors for FPU's Natural Gas Department began work on a 9.1-mile extension of gas line to connect the existing Lincoln and Flintville area gas lines to improve service by increasing the volume and pressure supplied to the southeast areas of the system. The new gas line provides a redundant "loop feed" for customers in this area.

The 9.1-mile length of gas line not only connects FPU's two existing lines previously installed in the Flintville area and along Lincoln Road, but it also makes natural gas service available to some 140 customers along the tie-line construction, which includes portions of Flintville, Flintville School, Oliver Smith, North Vanntown School, Vanntown and South Lincoln roads.

"The new gas tie line will help FPU ensure that we are able to supply high volume and pressure in the area to secure reliability now and to meet future customer growth," says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. "Our goal is to get ahead of any potential problems that could occur under continued load growth in this area."

To reduce disturbance to the right of way, construction crews installed the majority of the new gas line using the boring and pipe-pulling methods. As large sections of the pipe were installed, the lines were tested before natural gas was activated.

This tie line is the completion of a multiple-year work plan that began in 2011. The first phase of the work plan included gas line extension along Highway 64 and Lees Creek Road with a new regulator station built at the Kelso Substation; the second phase extended gas line from Howell Hill Road to Brighton Road; the third leg of the work plan extended gas line from Brighton Road to Flintville Road.



Crew members work to install approximately 1.7 miles of gas line along North Vanntown School Road in February.

## May is Budget Billing catch-up month

**T**he month of May is set aside for Fayetteville Public Utilities to reconcile all Budget Billing accounts.

We strongly encourage you to check your most recent FPU bill to see if the Budget Billing balance for your electric and/or natural gas account(s) is a credit or debit. All outstanding balances will be settled during the month of May, which could leave you owing an additional amount to catch your account up.

Please be aware that if you have a credit balance, FPU will refund your overpayment accrued throughout the year.

But if you have a debit balance, you must pay the underpayment amount when your May utility bill is due.

If you have any questions about the Budget Billing catch-up month, please call FPU's Customer Service Department at 931-433-1522. We will be happy to assist you with your utility account.

***Budget Billing helps you better plan for utility bills each month. To participate in the payment plan, simply speak with any FPU customer service employee and sign the Budget Billing application form at our office.***

**Fayetteville Public Utilities will be closed on Monday, May 30, for Memorial Day.  
If you need to report a leak or outage, please call FPU at 931-433-1522.  
Dispatchers and service crews will be available during the holiday to assist you.**

# Utility youth board tours substation, learns about electricity

“I did not realize just how many redundancies Fayetteville Public Utilities has in place for the electric grid,” says Aidan Pace, Student Utility Board member.

FPU’s Student Utility Board (SUB) recently visited with Electric Department employees who shared with them how electric services begin in the FPU Engineering Department, how power is delivered by substations and electric lines and how power is restored during outages.

“Today was fun!” says Amari Bryson, SUB member. “I didn’t know that this much happens in the Electric Department.”

FPU’s Jamie Rozar, engineering supervisor, explained how the Engineering Department uses computer technology to design and map new electric services for customers. Ron Thomas, FPU’s substation and metering supervisor, and Lewis Steelman, FPU’s electric operations superintendent, detailed how electricity is delivered to Lincoln County by the Tennessee Valley Authority and how FPU distributes electricity across our service area. Employees also shared with the youth board interesting stories about power outages and restoration efforts.

Electric linemen A.J. Russell and Lee Smith demonstrated several tools and pieces of safety equipment used every day to work on power lines. They also demonstrated the bucket lift on the service truck.



*Clockwise from top, SUB members watch as Lee Smith and A.J. Russell explain how the long stick and other tools assist them with everyday work.*



*From left are SUB members Erin Bergman, Brileigh Gentry, Jokia Raybon, Amari Bryson, Kagen Buntley, Leah Hampton and Aidan Pace with FPU’s Ron Thomas at the Hamilton Substation. Brileigh attempts the common task of connecting a screw and bolt while wearing a lineman’s gloves.*

“I really enjoyed going to the Hamilton Substation and learning about how it helps deliver electricity to our community,” says SUB member Kagen Buntley.

FPU’s youth board finishes its year learning from employees in the Natural Gas and Water departments. In May, FPU will award one SUB member the utility’s \$500 scholarship. The recipient will be announced in the following issue of *The Tennessee Magazine* and in other local media outlets.



**S**aving energy and money is important, and following simple energy-saving tips around the home can make a difference. On average, the heating and cooling system accounts for 40 percent or more of your household energy use. Considering this, you may want to re-evaluate where you set the thermostat as the seasons change. It is recommended for efficiency and savings that you set the thermostat to 75 degrees or warmer in the summertime to cool your home.

Programmable thermostats can automatically adjust the temperature settings while you sleep for even greater energy savings. Try it, and see the difference a few degrees can make!

# FPU focused on children's safety, education

Throughout the school year, Fayetteville Public Utilities employees have visited local elementary schools to present educational programs on electricity and natural gas safety and basic operations to raise awareness and proper use of the two utilities.

"Because electricity is all around us and we use it for so many applications, it is easy to forget how dangerous its misuse can be," says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. "Furthermore, natural gas and electric lines are sometimes buried underground, making them even more dangerous. This is why we stress the importance of calling before you dig and teach students and adults alike how to recognize the odor that natural gas emits when there's a leak."

During the safety presentation, students watched "Play it Safe Around Electricity," a video featuring Louie the Lightning Bug that teaches important lessons: Don't climb trees near power lines, don't use appliances or electronics while near a bathtub or sink filled with water and never touch a fallen power line. The presentation also teaches students how to recognize the smell of natural gas and what to do if they suspect a leak.

Students are invited to color Louie the Lightning Bug in FPU's coloring contest where winners receive special prizes. Louie the Lightning Bug also makes a personal appearance at the schools to visit with students and help award prizes.

FPU also teaches students the basics of electricity with the Experiments with Electricity program geared toward fourth-



At left, students at Blanche School and Riverside Christian Academy are joined by Louie the Lightning Bug. Above, a fourth-grader at South Lincoln School wires a series circuit.



graders. Students learn how to wire series and parallel circuits and the difference between insulators and conductors by testing them with their circuits.

These are just two of the youth programs FPU offers to teach local school students about utilities. If your school would like to schedule a visit from FPU employees or Louie the Lightning Bug, please call Gina Warren at 931-433-1522, ext. 166.

## Prevent cross-connection, backflow hazards

Hazardous cross-connection and backflow contamination are things we should all be concerned with, and Fayetteville Public Utilities encourages you to take the necessary precautions to help us protect our public drinking water from accidental contamination.

A cross-connection is the point at which a non-drinking water substance can possibly come in contact with drinking water. Connections as seemingly harmless as a sprinkler system, hot tub or ornamental pond can easily enable contaminants to enter potable (drinking) water lines via backflow. Customers install potential cross connections like these and other water-using equipment every day, but they are often unaware of the potential danger that lurks in the pipes as a result.

Backflow, caused by backsiphonage and/or backpressure, is the unwanted reverse flow of nonpotable water back into a water system. Backflow can allow bacteria, chemicals or physical contaminants to enter the water system if cross-connections are uncontrolled. Backpressure can happen without warning and is sometimes the result when fire departments flush fire hydrants or when there's a water leak on the main water supply line.

Some of the most common backflow contaminants come from swimming pools, livestock watering containers and gar-

den hoses submerged into pesticide mixtures for crops and lawns. If backsiphonage occurs when water hoses are submerged in any of these pollutants, accidental contamination of the public water supply will result.

FPU takes every precaution possible to prevent cross-connection backflow from entering our distribution system. We strongly urge our customers to eliminate cross-connections whenever possible and control connections that can't be eliminated by installing backflow preventers. Furthermore, FPU requires reduced pressure backflow devices to be installed on all sprinkler systems and recommends that you install some type of backflow device on your garden hoses, livestock water connections and more.

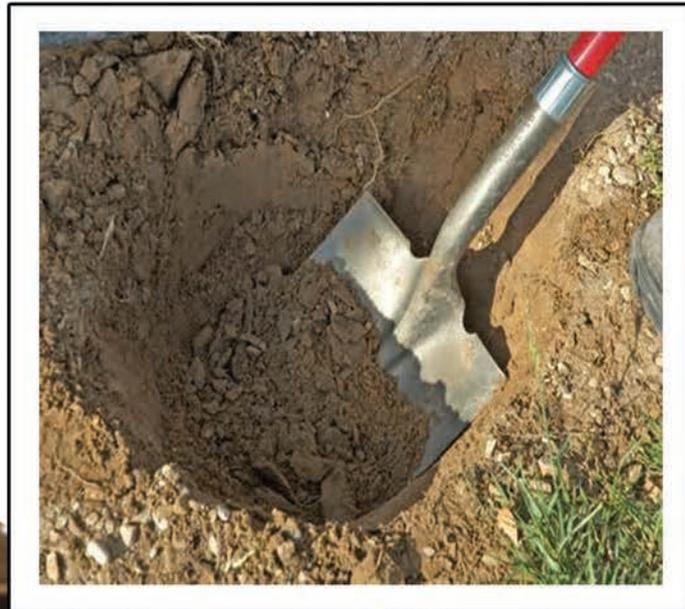
Doing your part is simple. Cross-connection prevention devices are inexpensive and can be found at your local hardware store.

Please help us keep your drinking water safe. Just a few steps now can prevent problems later. Call FPU at 931-433-1522 if you have questions or concerns about the safety of your water supply as it relates to cross-connection and backflow contamination.



## Consider a home energy audit

Learn how energy is consumed in your home. Take a home energy audit, a detailed assessment that can give you a roadmap for future energy-related investments. See energy expert Patrick Keegan's column on page 27 for more on the testing involved and the information you'll receive.



Your plans may include planting a tree, tilling a new garden spot or digging trenches for a house foundation.

Whatever the case, before you begin to dig or excavate, call 811 to have underground utilities marked.

Fayetteville Public Utilities urges you to always call before you dig to keep you and those nearby safe and to also help prevent damage to underground utility lines.

It's one free, easy step. Call 811 or visit [www.call811.com](http://www.call811.com) before you dig.



408 College Street, West

(931) 433-1522

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## Forked Deer Electric Cooperative

P.O. Box 67  
Halls, TN 38040

### Office Hours:

Monday-Thursday  
7 a.m.-5 p.m.

### Staff

**Jeff Newman**, General Manager

**Mary Blake**, Office Manager

**Jay Burress**, Operating Line  
Superintendent

**E.W. Baggett**, Apprentice Lineman

**Johnny Biggs**, Journeyman Lineman

**Morgan Bowser**, Apprentice  
Lineman

**Jimmy Buckner**, Apprentice  
Lineman

**Kathy Cherry**, Cashier/Receptionist

**Kevin Fair**, Work Order Clerk

**Cameron Green**, Groundman

**Rosalind Green**, Member Services  
Representative

**Kenneth Hankins Jr.**, Groundman

**Bubba Humphreys**, Crew Chief/  
Working Foreman

**Cody Hutchison**, Apprentice Lineman

**Madison Laster**, Apprentice Lineman

**Kelly Mayo**, Head Cashier

**Ross Norrid**, Equipment Operator

**Chad Paris**, Journeyman Lineman

**Nelda Kay Ray**, General  
Accounting Clerk

**Keven Reece**, Groundman

**Holly Saliba**, Cashier/Receptionist

**Tyler Selph**, Journeyman Lineman

**Brad Stafford**, Apprentice Lineman

**Andrea Tims**, Billing Clerk

**Brian Vaughn**, ITT

**Kim Weeks**, Accounting Clerk

**Chance Williams**, Groundman

**Donald Williams**, Meter Tech/  
Collections

**Mark Yeager**, Engineering Aide

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## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

# Take a break from technology

Many complain that it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days.

As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do. In fact, device dependence has become so severe, even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later, you can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to "soak up" and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Device dependence isn't only detrimental to our cognitive development; it can also strain our relationships. Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this daydreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).



Jeff Newman  
General Manager,  
Forked Deer  
Electric Cooperative

- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.

- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all your push notifications so they don't distract you from the task at hand.

- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: Start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking his or her phone or playing a video game. Make the prize a fun treat to incentivize them to win!

- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.

- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens.

We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund

**C**elebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, by making your home more energy-efficient.

Below are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows. Check the attic for the correct amount of insulation. Switch to LED lightbulbs. Plant a deciduous tree on the sunny side of your house; in a few years, shade from the leaves will cool your home from the sun in summer and then fall off to let the sun's rays warm your home in the winter. Old cable TV boxes use a lot of energy, so if yours is not ENERGY STAR-rated, call your cable provider and ask for a new one. If you have a major appliance like a refrigerator, washing machine or dryer that's more than 10 years old, don't repair it. The energy efficiency of a newer model will likely pay for itself with energy savings in a few years. Before buying any appliance, look for the ENERGY STAR label, and learn to read when comparing products.

**3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**1** Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

**2** DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.

**3** Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

3. Call Forked Deer Electric Cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## Heat and humidity vs. dry heat

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## Heat reduction is priority No. 1

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air-conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool, indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who

suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockages. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. For more information about how to save energy, visit [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com).

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# Products to avoid

By Tom Tate

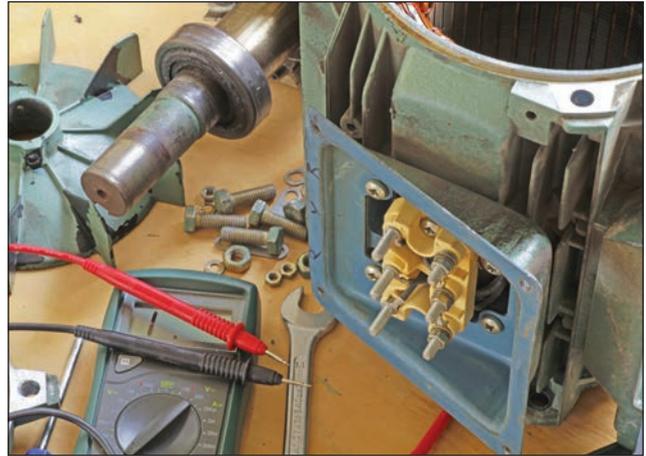
**W**hen it comes to saving energy, caveat emptor is alive and well. We are all bombarded by claims that border on outright falsehoods, so it pays to cautiously view savings claims from third parties. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.

Electric space heaters drain energy savings from your home if used incorrectly. Companies make elaborate claims about the amount of money you can save and charge exorbitant sums for their products. The advertisements frequently target those on fixed incomes, presenting false hope while extracting precious dollars from their customers. I have seen a number of these space heaters and admit they appear to be well made, but they typically offer no better economy than any other 1,500-watt electric heater. Bottom line: Electric space heaters should only be used to heat small spaces — not your entire home.

Black boxes that claim to clean up power, protect appliances and reduce energy use come and go. These often require an electrician to install and claim to improve power quality, smooth out power fluctuations and store energy so you can reduce your bills. Save your money. The concepts they present are already in use by your co-op and require utility-size equipment to deliver them. Something that can fit in a shoebox will deliver no value, at least not in the areas promised.

When you see the ad that reads, “The power companies don’t want you to know,” skip it. These are generally claims around building your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless “free” electricity. I would equate these with the emails I get from foreign countries telling me I can receive millions of dollars by simply sending all my banking information. At least in the case of the homemade renewables and limitless motor you get some cool plans and parts lists. You decide if it’s worth \$50 to \$200. I’ll pass.

There is a product that claims it will replace basement dehumidifiers and save tons of money. It basically is a fan system that vents all the basement air outside. Yes, dehumidifiers can be expensive to run and are a nuisance when you have to empty the water. Knowing that, I asked the Cooperative Research Network (an arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) a



*Be wary of do-it-yourself solutions to build your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store. The old adage again rings true: “If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.”*

few years ago if these products delivered on their savings claims. The experts said no. The problem is that when you blow all the basement air outside, it is replaced with conditioned air from other parts of the house, forcing your HVAC system to work harder and dramatically reducing the promised savings. Here’s my solution: I set my dehumidifier to 60 percent and run a hose to my floor drain. This resolves the water-emptying hassle and really reduces the power use while keeping my basement acceptably dry.

I will close with a warning that’s not technology-related: Scammers love to call or stop by your home, claiming they represent the local power company. Never give personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be a Forked Deer Electric Cooperative employee without confirming his or her identity. Ask for a call-back number from the caller, then check with FDEC. Ask the door-to-door person for a valid FDEC ID. If it’s really a co-op employee, he or she will be able to prove it.

Most of us want to save energy and keep our bills manageable. Technology can help do this, but be careful. Call FDEC at 731-836-7508 before making any investments in technology that seem too good to be true. You’ll be glad you did.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# Think before pulling the plug

By John Pulley, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**Y**ou may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of units fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters,” makes its case with brochures, fliers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake: The intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

At Forked Deer Electric Cooperative, we believe electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting fixtures. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

As your trusted energy adviser, Forked Deer Electric Cooperative wants to provide you, our member-owners, with the facts you need to make the best decision.

Let’s look at the propane marketing campaign. Some of the claims challenge common sense and would be hard to prove, including assertions about efficiency, environmental impacts and cost. “With a propane water heater, you can use less energy, save money and reduce your carbon footprint,” proclaims Danny Lipford, host of the television program “Today’s Homeowner,” in a campaign video. “They really are that efficient.”

Apparently Danny neglected to mention that propane is a fossil fuel.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines and exhaust vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign

would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater “can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy-cold showers,” Lipford warns. Actually, in most cases, installing an electric heater is a snap.

At Forked Deer Electric Cooperative, we believe electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are readily available.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric heaters don’t lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house. Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.
- The cost of electricity is less volatile than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.

Touchstone Energy has produced three fact sheets on water heating choices, water heater efficiency, and hot water distribution that are part of the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool. To access these fact sheets, visit [homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com](http://homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com), enter information about your home and go to the “systems” tab for the water heater sheets.



# Tamper-resistant receptacles are permanent safety solutions

**N**early seven children a day are shocked or burned when they slide keys, pins, paper clips and other small objects into electrical outlets in their homes, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Up to a dozen of them die each year.

That means each room in your house that has an electrical outlet — and that’s probably every single room — presents a danger to your children. It costs about \$2 per outlet to replace your old ones with

updated, tamper-resistant versions designed with a built-in shutter system that prevents objects from entering the slots. Plugs can still fit into the slots, however, when equal pressure is applied to both sides.

Tamper-resistant receptacles are safer than removable outlet caps because children are unable to detach them.

The National Electrical Code requires new homes to come with tamper-resistant receptacles, but it’s up to the owners of older homes to upgrade their outlets.

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## Is your coffee maker compatible with your home’s wiring?

**T**he coffee maker in your kitchen might not be safe to use at home. How can you know? Look at how the safety organization UL has rated the appliance: for commercial or residential use.

A commercially rated coffee maker is likely to be a sturdier appliance than the one you need for your kitchen. That sounds good, but if you use it in your kitchen, it could stress your electrical wiring designed for less-robust devices.

In fact, the coffee maker manufacturer Keurig will not honor the warranty on a commercial unit that is

used at home. It also won’t stand by the warranty on a home coffee maker if you set it up at the office.

Especially when used in an older home, a commercial coffee maker could trip your circuit breaker, overheat or even cause a fire. Plus, the coffee maker itself is likely to have a shorter life if it’s used at home where the wiring isn’t up to powering a commercial appliance.

Your best bet when replacing your coffee maker: Buy one labeled for household use if you intend to use it at home. And stick with those rated for commercial use if you plan to use them in an office or commercial building.

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## Plant a tree on Earth Day

**E**arth Day is Friday, April 22, this year, and it’s the perfect time to plant a tree. Earth Day organizers encourage everyone to plant trees wherever they can: in parks, in their neighborhoods or in their own yards.

If you plant a tree in your yard, choose a strategic location that will allow the tree to shade your home from the hot summer sun. As it grows, the tree will help reduce your air-conditioning bills and keep your home more comfortable.

Some tips from the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees on the west and northwest sides of your home will shade the building during mid- to late afternoons.
- Keep branches pruned enough that they don’t block your view when you look out of west-facing windows.
- Shade trees along driveways and patios will keep you cooler while you’re outside. The shade keeps the concrete and your yard cooler.
- Protect your outdoor air-conditioning unit from weather-related wear and tear by planting a shade tree nearby. The less direct sunlight that hits the unit, the more efficiently it will run all summer.



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



**F**lying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

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*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
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Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time

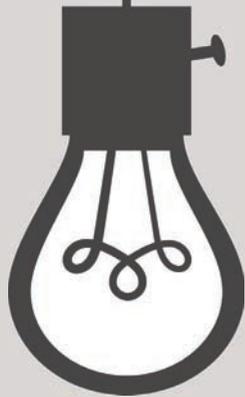


# SMALL TOWNS

2015 ANNUAL  
REPORT

# BIG IDEAS

## GIBSON ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION



**G**ibson Electric Membership Corporation — your not-for-profit, member-owned and member-controlled cooperative — serves 20 small towns and many more communities in West Tennessee and Western Kentucky. We may be small-town, but we have BIG ideas. We are driven to provide you exceptional service and a reliable, affordable product. We also are continuously exploring ways we can improve your quality of life. Yes, we're local, and that's a good thing! Our board and employees are your family and friends. We care, and we are committed to serving you in a BIG way!

### S.O.S.

#### Safety, Operational Excellence and Service

Safety, Operational Excellence and Service is our employee motto, and we work conscientiously to excel in all three areas. We're proud that Gibson EMC has been recertified by the Rural Electric Safety Achievement Program as it represents our efforts to work safely and keep our members safe. We congratulate our Tiptonville Member Service Center employees for earning an award from the National Safety Council for working 47,471 hours accident-free. At right is Payton Featherston representing Gibson EMC in the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association Lineman Rodeo. Gibson EMC's lineworkers earned perfect scores on every Rodeo event. Two of our employees — Philip Jewell and Jamie Moore — received Touchstone Energy's Power and Hope Award in 2015 for their heroic efforts to help others.



2015 was a monumentally good year for Gibson Electric Membership Corporation that peaked with strong, favorable votes from the former Hickman-Fulton Counties Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation membership and our Tennessee membership for our systems to merge. The merger became effective January 1, 2016, making Gibson EMC a bigger and better cooperative. We now serve almost 39,000 members over 3,500 miles of distribution line in eight West Tennessee counties (Crockett, Dyer, Gibson, Haywood, Lake, Lauderdale, Madison and Obion) and four Western Kentucky counties (Carlisle, Fulton, Graves and Hickman). Thank you to our board members and employees for your hard work, and thank you to our members for your enormous support.

Leading up to the merger, we had worked on projects to expedite our ability to provide the same high level of service to our Kentucky members as we provide to our Tennessee members. We used savings from the merger to lower our Kentucky members' distribution rates on Jan. 1. We integrated our databases in mid-January, and we are on track to have our mapping systems fully integrated by spring. By summer, we will have fully implemented our Supervisory Data and Acquisition System (SCADA) in the Kentucky area. SCADA enables us to monitor substation breakers, isolate the locations of outages and restore service more quickly.

During 2015, we completed several large projects, including the construction of the Woodland Mills substation and an upgrade to the Ridgely substation. Both of these projects as well as the addition of more SCADA equipment on primary lines throughout our system will improve service reliability by providing us with more and better information.



## **MERGER VOTE**

### Members Vote in Favor

In October, 88 percent of former Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC members voted in favor of the merger. Above, Gibson EMC's Tennessee members vote unanimously in favor of the merger at a special meeting in November.



## **WOODLAND MILLS**

### Substation Completed

Gibson EMC's Woodland Mills substation serves about 1,500 members in Woodland Mills, the area west of Section Line Road, and the area along Lake Road, including the communities of Dixie, Clayton and Walnut Log. With its completion in October 2015 and the January merger, Gibson EMC now owns and maintains 20 distribution substations.

## Gibson Electric Membership Corporation

We have continued to grow Gibson EMC's fiber transport business in 2015. Fiber transport is an offshoot of our electric business that supports our efforts to provide reliable and affordable service. It was initially installed to connect Gibson EMC's substations and member service centers, but it also is allowing us to help members like schools, government, banks and commercial businesses located along our fiber route to gain access to modern and efficient telecommunications services. Revenue from Gibson EMC's fiber transport has helped us to hold down our members' electric rates.

Another project we have tackled for the sake of cost, efficiency, environment and aesthetics is the conversion of most of our mercury vapor outdoor lights to LED fixtures.

In 2015, we also completed our data center where we host data storage for Gibson EMC and for several other commercial and industrial members. The data center provides critical business redundancy for our cooperative and meets this need for others we serve, too.

Gibson EMC knows the importance of jobs to our members, so we provide support to our local chambers of commerce and to our local governmental entities. We also provide many services to our commercial and industrial members.

In 2015, Tennessee Hardwood Pellets LLC began its production of wood briquettes used for heating and cooking. As owner Larry Page and sons Trae and Alex retrofitted the former Plastech building in Kenton, we installed a 500 kVA transformer there, assisted them with wiring and lighting recommendations, and discussed load-shifting strategies to help minimize demand charges.



### TENNESSEE TRACTOR

Dan Davis

"Gibson EMC's data center has met an essential need for Tennessee Tractor. It's provided a reasonably priced data storage solution for us, and we appreciate this local service."

### INDUSTRIAL CONSTRUCTION

#### Green Plains

When completely filled, Green Plains Grain Company LLC's grain house holds enough grain that if you filled tractor trailer trucks and lined them one behind the other, the trucks would stretch from Rives to Memphis.





## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

### OUTsideIN Clothing Grant

Gibson EMC helped secure a grant for Crockett County Office on Aging and for Troy's OUTsideIN Clothing through CoBank's Sharing Success program. CoBank matches the cooperatives' grants for qualifying projects dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000. Above, Gibson EMC President and CEO Dan Rodamaker presents a check to OUTsideIN Clothing Founder and President LeEllen Smith. Gibson EMC also provided assistance with Tiptonville's Main Street lighting project in 2015. Each year, Gibson EMC helps local communities with festivals, plants trees in recognition of Arbor Day, sponsors members' children to participate in 4-H Electric Camp, the Washington Youth Tour and Youth Leadership Summit and much more.

Near Obion, Green Plains Grain Company LLC opened a bulk grain storage facility in 2015. Located next to the Green Plains Obion LLC ethanol plant, the new facility offers an additional 5.5 million bushels of grain storage. We installed a 1500 kVA pad-mount transformer, 2500 kVA underground primary service and metering equipment there.

Gibson EMC also assists Green Plains, Pictsweet, ABB, KMI, Williams Sausage and other industrial

members through the Valley Investment Initiative program. We help our commercial members, like Tates Family Foods, through the Energy Rights Solutions for Business program.

We embrace technology because it helps us keep your service reliable and affordable. It helps us operate efficiently and makes doing business with us more convenient for you. We hope you like the new "Gibson EMC" app. It is free and enables you to easily and conveniently make payments,

track your electricity use, report outages, view our Outage Map and more.

Our automated phone system assisted members through more than 25,000 calls per month last year. Of course, if you prefer to speak with an employee, you can connect with the operator at any time by pressing zero. We try to strike a technology balance with which you are comfortable and give you choices. PAY-Go is a perfect example of a billing option that thousands of our members are now using.



A new program members may want to take advantage of is eScore; it can help you earn cash rebates while making improvements for energy efficiency. Just go to [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com) to register, select a vendor and then you can have your energy efficiency improvements done.

Meeting your energy needs, serving you well and doing all

we can to improve your quality of life are why we're here. You don't get more "grassroots" than our start 80 years ago by local farmers who wanted electricity to improve their way of life. We have always been and will always be small-town, and that's something we're proud of. But we're also proud of our persistent push for improvement. Small towns, BIG ideas.

## MEMBER APPRECIATION

### Jackson Generals

Each year Gibson EMC hosts events for members as "thank yous" for the opportunity to serve you and for your support. Above, from left are Gibson EMC Board Member Joan Mouser, Jackson Generals mascot Sarge, Carter Swalley, Peyton Wilmoth, Parker-Ayden Simpson and Gibson EMC President and CEO Dan Rodamaker at the Jackson Generals Member Appreciation Event.

## PAY-GO

### Claudia Spurlin

"I like being on PAY-Go because my daily email alerts let me know how much electricity I'm using. It keeps me focused on energy efficiency, and there are no surprises with a bill at the end of the month. I feel like I'm more in control."

Claudia Spurlin, left, hands a payment to Member Service Representative Tina Slayden at Gibson EMC's new Hickman office.



**VOTING MEMBERS OF THE  
GIBSON EMC BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Effective Jan. 1, 2016



Steve Sanders,  
Chairman  
District 1



Keith Heglar,  
Secretary-Treasurer  
District 2



Tony Bargery  
District 3



Larry Hicks  
District 4



Wray Pulliam  
District 5



Joan Mouser  
District 6



Rana Buchanan  
District 7



Bob McCurdy, Assist.  
Secretary-Treasurer  
District 8



Richard Skiles  
District 9



Keith Forrester  
District 10



Don Leathers,  
Vice Chairman  
District 11



David Kimbell  
District 12

**GIBSON EMC PRESIDENT AND CEO  
AND ATTORNEY**



Dan Rodamaker  
President and CEO



Jim Ryal  
Attorney

**ADVISORY MEMBERS OF THE  
GIBSON EMC BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Effective Jan. 1, 2016



Ralph Wayne Adams Jr.\*



Vercel Bryant\*



Jerry Graham\*



Sammy Todd\*

\*Former voting HFCRECC board members who are now serving in an advisory role on the Gibson EMC board.

**TAX DOLLARS BENEFIT COOPERATIVE SERVICE AREA**

**Gibson EMC Ad Valorem Taxes**

Each year, Gibson EMC pays ad valorem taxes to the towns and counties in which the cooperative has infrastructure. The amount of taxes paid is based on the assessed value of the infrastructure, including buildings, substations, transformers, poles and lines. The 2015 ad valorem taxes paid to counties were ...

Crockett.....	\$259,142
Dyer.....	\$38,464
Gibson.....	\$468,067
Haywood.....	\$1,846
Lake.....	\$123,371
Lauderdale.....	\$36
Madison.....	\$31,159
Obion.....	\$273,725
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$1,195,810</b>

**Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC  
Property Taxes**

Each year Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC paid property taxes to the towns and counties in which the cooperative had infrastructure. The amount of taxes paid was based on the assessed value of the infrastructure, including buildings, substations, transformers, poles and lines. The 2015 property taxes paid to counties and the state of Kentucky were ...

Carlisle.....	\$12,547
Lake.....	\$65
Fulton.....	\$50,440
Graves.....	\$628
Hickman.....	\$32,106
Obion.....	\$4,408
State of Kentucky.....	\$47,469
<b>TOTAL.....</b>	<b>\$147,663</b>

## Gibson Electric Membership Corporation

# THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation's and Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC's books were audited by the firm of Alexander, Thompson, Arnold, PLLC, Certified Public Accountants, Union City, Tenn. Copies of the audit report are on file at Gibson EMC's corporate office, 1207 S. College St., Trenton, Tenn., 38382.

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>Gibson EMC</b>	<b>Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC</b>	<b>Combined</b>
Electric Plant	\$146,937,058	\$20,646,392	\$167,583,450
Depreciation	(\$64,414,781)	(\$4,994,026)	(\$69,408,807)
Net Plant	\$82,522,277	\$15,652,366	\$98,174,643
Reserve and Cash Fund	\$12,964,422	\$1,265,470	\$14,229,892
Current and Accrued Assets	\$8,021,310	\$1,617,769	\$9,639,079
Deferred Debits	\$5,517,641	\$609,104	\$6,126,745
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$109,025,650</b>	<b>\$19,144,709</b>	<b>\$128,170,359</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Current and Accrued Liabilities	\$8,722,035	\$1,651,885	\$10,373,920
Deferred Credits	\$510,109	\$186,382	\$696,491
Membership Investment	\$247,456	\$61,130	\$308,586
Long-Term Debt	\$20,114,056	\$4,250,028	\$24,364,084
Earnings Reinvested in System Assets	\$79,431,994	\$12,995,284	\$92,427,278
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$109,025,650</b>	<b>\$19,144,709</b>	<b>\$128,170,359</b>

## REVENUE AND EXPENSE STATEMENT

Operating Revenue	\$84,459,792	\$10,600,588	\$95,060,380
Purchased Power Expense	\$62,368,840	\$6,169,091	\$68,537,931
Operations Expense	\$8,465,615	\$1,687,753	\$10,153,368
Maintenance Expense	\$4,194,434	\$1,458,054	\$5,652,488
Depreciation Expense	\$5,234,641	\$696,263	\$5,930,904
Tax Expense	\$1,200,000	\$444,390	\$1,644,390
<b>Net Margin from Operations</b>	<b>\$2,996,262</b>	<b>\$145,037</b>	<b>\$3,141,299</b>
Non-Operating Income	\$1,248,262	\$55,752	\$1,304,014
Interest Expense	\$1,421,899	\$209,036	\$1,630,935
<b>Net Margin</b>	<b>\$2,822,625</b>	<b>(\$8,247)</b>	<b>\$2,814,378</b>

## 2015 Revenue Per \$1

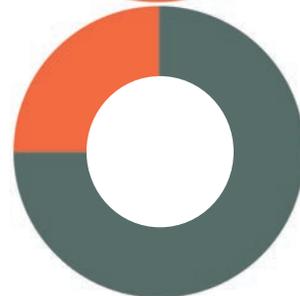
Combined, Gibson EMC and Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC received \$95,060,380 in revenues in the fiscal year that ended Dec. 31, 2015. Our revenues came from several sources: residential members, commercial and industrial members, miscellaneous income, lighting and fiber:



RESIDENTIAL MEMBERS: 59¢  
 COMMERCIAL AND  
 INDUSTRIAL MEMBERS: 34¢  
 MISCELLANEOUS INCOME:  
 3¢  
 LIGHTING: 2¢  
 FIBER: 2¢

## 2015 Expenses Per \$1

Gibson EMC and Hickman-Fulton Counties RECC buy power from the Tennessee Valley Authority. In the fiscal year that ended Dec. 31, 2015, we spent a combined 75 percent of our electric sales revenue to pay our TVA power bill. The other 25 percent was used for operations, maintenance, depreciation, interest and tax expenses.



PURCHASED POWER  
 FROM TVA: 75¢  
 OPERATIONS,  
 MAINTENANCE,  
 DEPRECIATION,  
 INTEREST AND TAX  
 EXPENSES: 25¢

April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## Holston Electric Cooperative

Serving more than 30,000 customers in Hawkins and Hamblen counties.

1200 W. Main St.  
P.O. Box 190  
Rogersville, TN 37857

423-272-8821  
423-272-6811

[www.holstonelectric.com](http://www.holstonelectric.com)

### Church Hill office

Highway 11-W and  
South Central Avenue  
Church Hill, TN 37642  
423-357-6441

### Russellville office

Highway 11-E  
Russellville, TN 37860

### General Manager

James B. Sandlin

### Board of Directors

#### President:

Gordell Ely

#### Vice President:

Jeff Ringley

#### Secretary-Treasurer:

Melvin Greene

Phil Barrett  
Brent Price  
David Marshall  
Lynn Parker

To report an outage or electrical emergency, call 423-272-8821 or 423-235-6811 day or night.

## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

### Critical connections behind the power

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it's appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgment. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — there is a lot more work taking place behind the scenes.

#### Promoting a culture of safety

The Operations and Engineering Department ensures that the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. Safety is an equally important area of focus. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count on the Operations and Engineering Department to ensure they have access to everything from lighting to heating and cooling and so much more.

#### Calling for energy efficiency

Member service representatives answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. The Member Services Department is responsible for ensuring that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the time you sign up for membership. This department is also responsible for the co-op's annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools, and



James B. Sandlin  
General Manager,  
Holston Electric Co-  
operative

communications such as this local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

#### Delivering timely savings

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of Holston Electric Cooperative. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail, often on a date that you have specified. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are still a business. As such, the Accounting Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the money

we pay for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employee salaries and other expenditures.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. This department handles recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to our members. For example, Holston Electric Cooperative sponsors youth scholarships and an educational trip to Washington, D.C. as part of the co-op's Youth Tour program each summer.

### *Staying in sync*

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart. From sponsoring local youth to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. And it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, more than 900 electric co-ops, including Holston Electric Cooperative, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

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## Take a break from technology

*By Meghaan Evans, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

**M**any complain that it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days. As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do. In fact, device dependence has become so severe, even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later, you can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to “soak-up” and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Device dependence isn't only detrimental to our cognitive development; it can also strain our relationships. Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this daydreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).

- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.
- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all your push notifications so they don't distract you from the task at hand.
- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: Start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking his or her phone or playing a video game. Make the prize a fun treat to incentivize them to win!
- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.
- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check-in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens.

We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## Heat and humidity vs. dry heat

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## Heat reduction is priority No. 1

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who

suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockage. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, contact our energy experts at [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com).

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

If you want to celebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, start by making your home more energy-efficient. Here are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows. Check the attic for the correct amount of insulation. Switch to LED lightbulbs. Plant a deciduous tree on the sunny side of your house; in a few years, shade from the leaves will cool your home from the sun in summer then fall off to let the sun's rays warm your home in the winter. Old cable TV boxes use a lot of energy, so if yours is not ENERGY STAR-rated, call your cable provider and ask for a new one. If you have a major appliance like a refrigerator, washing machine or dryer that's more than 10 years old, don't repair it. The energy efficiency of a newer model will likely pay for itself with energy savings in a few years. Before buying any appliance, look for the ENERGY STAR label, and learn to read it when comparing products.
3. Call the Tennessee Valley Authority's eScore number at 855-237-2673 to learn about energy-saving programs. TVA may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

### 3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY

1



Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

2

DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.



3



Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

Save the date!  
Saturday, April 16  
9 a.m. - noon  
15th Annual  
Cherokee Lake  
**Power Cleanup**

This annual event begins at the Quarryville Boat Ramp on Highway 11W near Mooresburg. Several sites along the lake have been targeted for cleaning. Participants will get trash bags and gloves at the Quarryville Boat Ramp and return all litter to the trash bin at the site.

Have a truck? You could transport bags of trash to the dumpster. Own a boat? You could be especially valuable accessing islands or areas of the lake that are heavily littered but cannot be reached by walking or driving in.

To register a team or for more information, call Nancy Barker at the Rogersville-Hawkins County Chamber of Commerce at 272-2186.

# Products to avoid

By Tom Tate, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

When it comes to saving energy, caveat emptor is alive and well. We are all bombarded by claims that border on outright falsehoods, so it pays to view savings claims from third parties cautiously. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.

Electric space heaters drain energy savings from your home if used incorrectly. Companies make elaborate claims about the amount of money you can save and charge exorbitant sums for their products. The advertisements frequently target those on a fixed income, presenting false hope while extracting precious dollars from their customers. I have seen a number of these space heaters and admit they appear to be well made, but they typically offer no better economy than any other 1,500-watt electric heater. Bottom line: Electric space heaters should only be used to heat small spaces — not your entire home.

Black boxes that claim to clean up power, protect appliances and reduce energy use come and go. These often require an electrician to install and claim to improve power quality, smooth out power fluctuations and store energy so you can reduce your bills. Save your money. The concepts they present are already in use by Holston Electric Cooperative and require utility-size equipment to deliver them. Something that can fit in a shoebox is not going to deliver any value, at least not in the areas promised. If you are concerned about protecting your sensitive appliances and electronics, talk to Holston Electric Cooperative about surge protection.

When you see the ad that reads, “The power companies don’t want you to know,” skip it. These are generally claims around building your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless “free” electricity. I would equate these with the emails I get from foreign countries telling me I can receive millions of dollars by simply sending all my banking



*Be wary of do-it-yourself solutions that claim you can build your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless “free” electricity. The old adage again rings true: “If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.”*

information. At least in the case of the homemade renewables and limitless motor, you get some cool plans and parts lists. You decide if it’s worth \$50 to \$200. I’ll pass.

There is a product that claims it will replace basement dehumidifiers and save tons of money. It basically is a fan system that vents all the basement air outside. Yes, dehumidifiers can be expensive to run and are a nuisance when you have to empty the water. Knowing that, I asked the Cooperative

Research Network (an arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) a few years ago if these products delivered on their savings claims. The experts said no. The problem is that when you blow all the basement air outside, it is replaced with conditioned air from other parts of the house, forcing your HVAC system to work harder and dramatically reducing the promised savings. Here’s my solution: I set my dehumidifier to 60 percent and run a hose to my floor drain. This resolves the water-emptying hassle and really reduces the power use while keeping my basement acceptably dry.

I will close with a warning that’s not technology-related: Scammers love to call or stop by your home, claiming they represent the local power company. Never give personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be a Holston Electric Cooperative employee without confirming his or her identity. Ask for a call-back number from the caller, then check with Holston Electric Cooperative. Ask the door-to-door person for a valid Holston Electric Cooperative ID. If it really is a co-op employee, he or she will be able to prove it.

Most of us want to save energy and keep our bills manageable. Technology can help do this, but be careful. Research the facts before making any investments in technology that seem too good to be true. You’ll be glad you did.

# 2016 Member Photo Contest

## *“Electricity: Powering Our Lives”*

Holston Electric Cooperative is holding a contest for members’ photos to be featured in our offices. Winning photos may be used in future newsletters or cooperative publications as well.

### *Photo Contest Criteria*

- Photos must be taken within the Holston Electric service area.
- Photos should capture power lines, poles and landscapes and embrace the theme of “Powering Our Lives.”
- Photos must have a horizontal (landscape) orientation.
- Photos can be in color or black and white.
- Only high-resolution, raw photos can be used.



### *Photo Contest Rules and Details*

- Contest will run through Sunday, May 1; however, submitted photos can be taken outside of this date range.
- Three photos per member will be accepted.
- HEC employees will determine the winning photos.
- All Holston Electric Cooperative members ages 18 older are eligible to submit photos. Member must own rights to photo.
- A Holston Electric Cooperative member under the age of 18 years old is eligible to participate but must submit a parent/guardian name with entry.
- Entries must be emailed in raw format to [msimpson@holstonelectric.com](mailto:msimpson@holstonelectric.com).

Winners will be awarded bill credits:

First place wins a \$100 bill credit; second, \$50; and third, \$25.

### **Title VI Statement of Nondiscrimination**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices and employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age or disability. Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American sign language, etc.) should contact the responsible agency or USDA’s TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) or at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed complaint form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
2. fax: 202-690-7442
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

# Think before pulling the plug

By John Pulley, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**Y**ou may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of units fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters,” makes its case with brochures, fliers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake: The intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

At Holston Electric Cooperative, we believe electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting fixtures. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

As your trusted energy adviser, Holston Electric Cooperative wants to provide you, our member-owners, with the facts you need to make the best decision.

Let’s look at the propane marketing campaign. Some of the claims challenge common sense and would be hard to prove, including assertions about efficiency, environmental impacts and cost. “With a propane water heater, you can use less energy, save money and reduce your carbon footprint,” proclaims Danny Lipford, host of the television program “Today’s Homeowner,” in a campaign video. “They really are that efficient.”

Apparently Danny neglected to mention that propane is a fossil fuel.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines and exhaust vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign

would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater “can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy-cold showers,” Lipford warns. Actually, in most cases, installing an electric heater is a snap.

At Holston Electric Cooperative, we believe electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are readily available.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric heaters don’t lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house. Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.
- The cost of electricity is less volatile than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.

Touchstone Energy has produced three fact sheets on water heating choices, water heater efficiency, and hot water distribution that are part of the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool. To access these fact sheets, visit [homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com](http://homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com), enter information about your home and go to the “systems” tab for the water heater sheets.



# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time





*Celebrating 75 Years  
1941-2016*

## Mountain Electric Cooperative

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Mountain City, TN 37683  
423-727-1800  
www.mountain.coop

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Newland, NC 28657  
828-733-0159

**Roan Mountain, Tenn., office**  
8477 Highway 19E  
Roan Mountain, TN 37687  
423-772-3521

**Office Hours**  
Monday through Friday  
8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**General Manager**  
Joe Thacker

**Board of Directors**  
President —  
**R. Bruce Lacey** (District 5)  
Vice President —  
**George Lowe** (District 2)  
Secretary/Treasurer —  
**Joe Atwood** (District 1)  
**Ross Dowell** (District 3)  
**Harry Smith** (District 4)  
**Ronnie Townson** (District 6)  
**W.O. Hampton** (District 7)  
**David Ellis** (District 8)

## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

### Critical connections behind the power

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it is appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgment. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — there is a lot more work taking place behind the scenes.

#### *The power behind your power*

As general manager of Mountain Electric Cooperative, I'm similar to the head coach of a team, ensuring that all the players (employees) know their roles and perform them at a high level. I also must recruit and retain talent; this is especially challenging in today's highly competitive hiring environment.

#### *Promoting a culture of safety*

The Operations and Engineering Department ensures that the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. Safety is an equally important area of focus. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping

to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count on the Operations and Engineering Department for everything from lighting, heating, cooling and so much more.



**Joe Thacker**  
General Manager,  
Mountain Electric  
Cooperative

#### *Calling for energy efficiency*

Member service representatives answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. The Member Services Department is responsible to ensure that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the time you sign up for membership. This department is also responsible for the co-op's annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools and communications such as this local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools and communications such as this local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

#### *Delivering timely savings*

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of Mountain Electric Cooperative. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are still a business. As such, the Accounting Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the

money we pay for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employees and other expenditures.

The Human Resources department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. They handle the recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to our members. For example, Mountain Electric sponsors youth scholarships and an educational trip to Washington, D.C., as part of the co-op's Youth Tour program each summer.

### *Staying in sync*

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart. From sponsoring a round-up program to support local worthy causes to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. And it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, Mountain Electric Cooperative together with 900 other electric cooperatives, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

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## Think before pulling the plug

*By John Pulley, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

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# Tamper-resistant receptacles are permanent safety solutions

Nearly seven children a day are shocked or burned when they slide keys, pins, paper clips and other small objects into electrical outlets in their homes, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Up to a dozen of them die each year.

That means each room in your house that has an electrical outlet — and that’s probably every single room — presents a danger to your children. It costs about \$2 per outlet to replace your old ones with updated, tamper-

resistant versions designed with a built-in shutter system that prevents objects from entering the slots. Plugs can still fit into the slots, however, when equal pressure is applied to both sides.

Tamper-resistant receptacles are safer than removable outlet caps because children are unable to detach them.

The National Electrical Code requires new homes to come with tamper-resistant receptacles, but it’s up to the owners of older homes to upgrade their outlets.

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## Calendar of events

### *Heritage Hall, Mountain City, Tenn.*

April 1-2 at 7 p.m. and April 3 at 3 p.m. • **“The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe.”** Tickets are \$7 for adults and \$5 for youth.

April 8 at 7 p.m. • **11th Annual Johnson County Talent Show**

April 12 at 7 p.m. • **Spring Concert**

April 16 at 7 p.m. • Barter Theatre’s **“Lying in State.”** Tickets are \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door and \$10 for youth.

April 21 at 7 p.m. • **JCHS Band Concert**

*For more information or tickets to these events, call 423-727-7444.*

### *Roan Mountain State Park, Roan Mountain, Tenn.*

April 22-24 • **Spring Naturalists’ Rally**

*For more information, call 423-543-5805.*



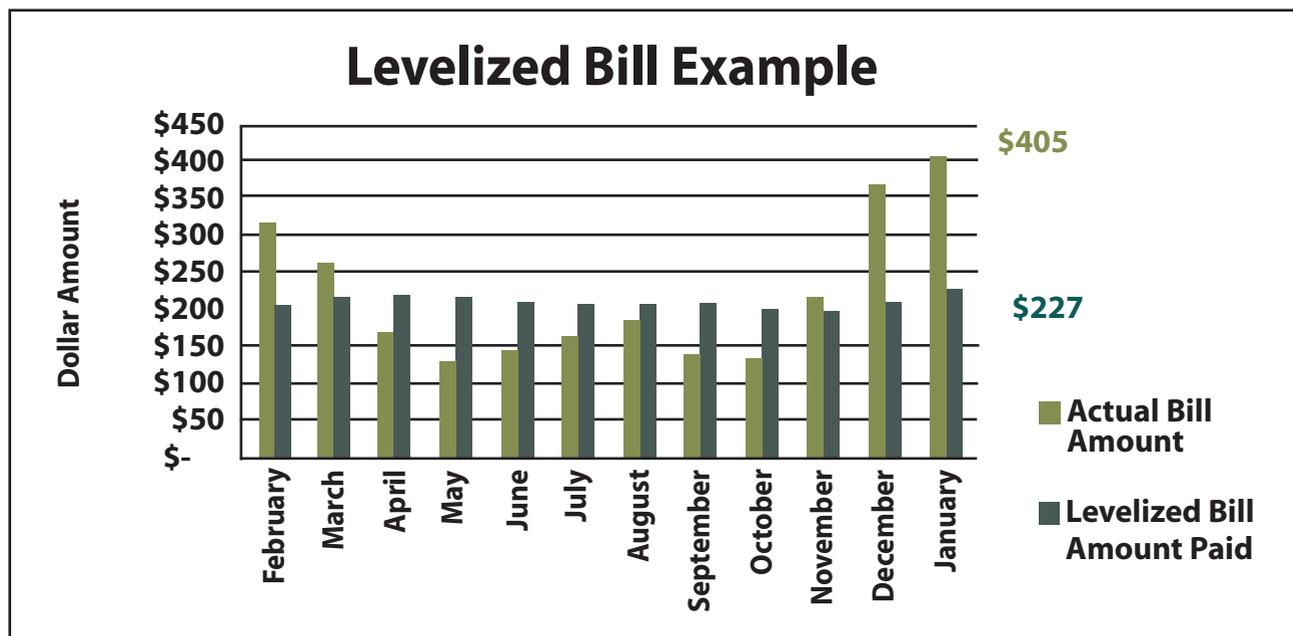
*Dakota Benfield has been promoted to apprentice lineman at the Newland office.*

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



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# Levelized Billing takes the guesswork out of budgeting for your electric bill



If you want to cut the guesswork out of your monthly electric bill, Mountain Electric Cooperative offers a sensible solution.

MEC’s Levelized Billing Plan is a great option for anyone, especially those on a budget. The plan works like this: Each month, your current month’s energy use is combined with your previous 11 months’ use to determine the average use over the past 12 months. This rolling 12-month average is then used to calculate your monthly bill, making your electric bills approximately the same each month. The bill amounts can vary 10 percent to 15 percent each month, depending on how much energy is consumed during the current billing period. However, this slight difference helps eliminate the need to pay a “settle-up” amount each year.

Another advantage to the plan is knowing the approximate amount of your electric bill, allowing you to plan ahead for that monthly expense.

The above chart shows an example of an actual levelized bill over the past year. The light green bars represent the actual bill amount, and darker bars represent the levelized amount the customer paid. As you can see, the highest bill the customer received in January was \$405, but thanks to Levelized Billing, the customer paid \$227. This is a lot easier on the pocketbook right after the holidays.

Are you ready to sign up for Levelized Billing? Call your local MEC office or mail in the form below. **Qualified participants must have an account balance of \$0 and have lived in the current residence for a year.**

## Yes, sign me up for Levelized Billing:

Customer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

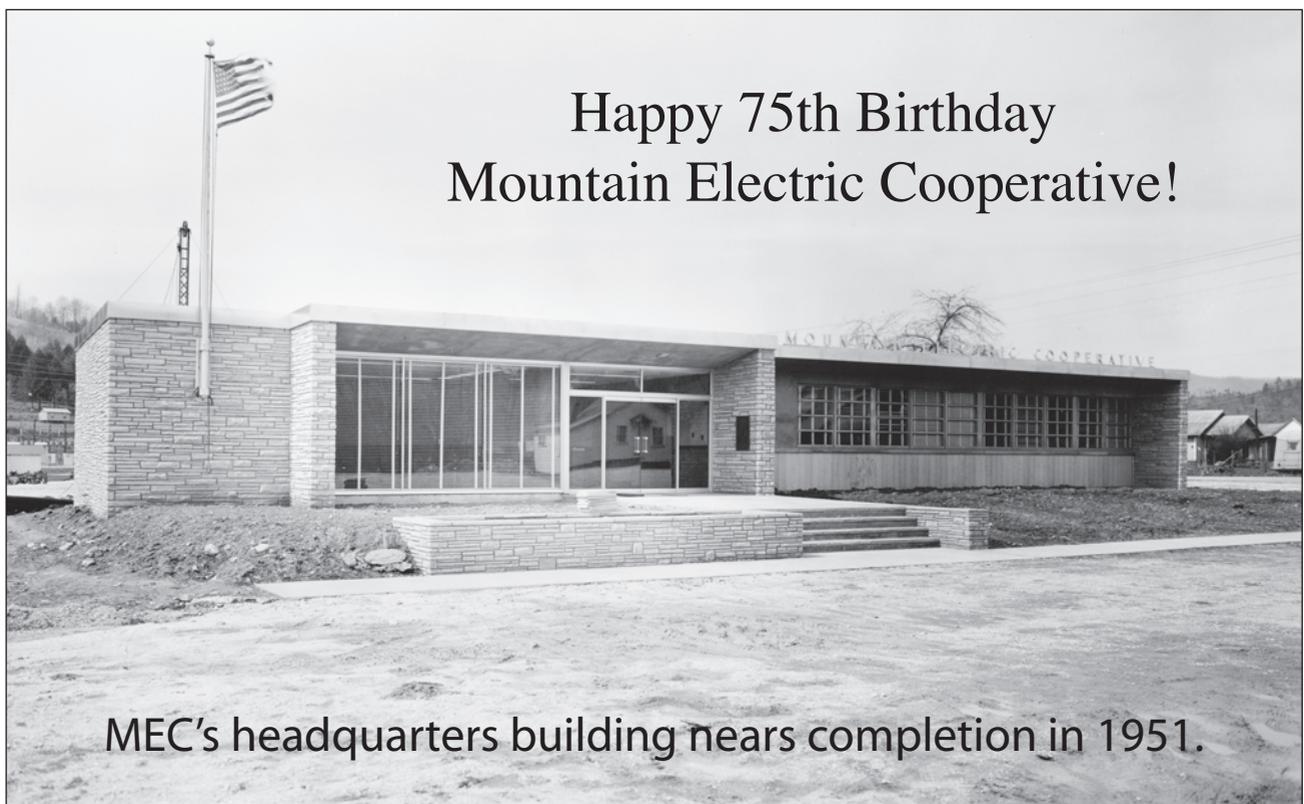
MEC Account No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Daytime Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To sign up, complete this coupon and mail it to Levelized Billing, Mountain Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 180, Mountain City, TN 37683.

# Great sakes alive! Mountain Electric is 75!

75 years ago, on April 1, 1941, citizens from our area met and organized Mountain Electric Cooperative. These citizens volunteered their time and worked diligently to acquire memberships and land easements to build the power lines. They took a big chance on a dream that many thought was impossible to achieve and laid the foundation for rural electrification for the people of the East Tennessee and Western North Carolina mountains. The dream had finally become a reality, and, thanks to the employees and members past and present, the company continues to flourish today and has a foundation that has remained rock-solid.

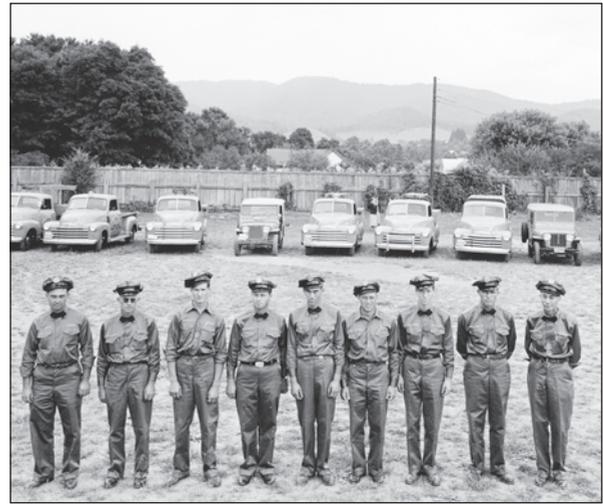


*Not everyone believed in the cooperative program, and some didn't think it could be successful. Some said it would be only a few years until the cooperative was forced to sell. Some of their reasons were, "Power companies cannot be managed by a local board of trustees. Too many power lines are being built that will never have a payback. The debt is way out of line; what will you do when the loans come due?" All of these prophecies were proven wrong.*

*— Charlie Hill Ward, Mountain Views, The Tennessee Magazine, April 1991*



Above left, Mountain Electric Cooperative's board of directors gathers at the 1950 annual meeting held in Mountain City near the old High School. From left are R.H. Goodwin, Grant Webb, E.F. Heaton, J.A. Street, W.Y. Hill, E.L. Lafferty and A.H. McQueen.



Above right, also posing at the 1950 annual meeting are some of the original employees when Mountain Electric was established. From left are Fred Smith, Kenneth Arnold, Raymond Turbeyfield, Herman Adams, George Stout, Ernest McCoury, John Hayes, Bill Canter and Leason Gregg.



At right, the 2016 board of directors are, clockwise from front left, Ronnie Townson, W.O. Hampton, Harry Smith, David Ellis, Bruce Lacey, George Lowe, Ross Dowell and Joe Atwood.

## Remember 1941 prices? Here's a sampling.

Postage stamp: 3 cents

Minimum wage: 30 cents

Loaf of bread: 8 cents

Gallon of milk: 34 cents

Pound of coffee: 24 cents

Gallon of gas: 12 cents

Chevrolet station wagon: \$995

Cadillac: \$4,045

Average cost of a new house: \$4,075

Average wages per year: \$1,750

Hoover vacuum cleaner: \$48.95

Frigidaire refrigerator: \$167.50

### *Some 1941 events:*

Franklin Delano Roosevelt was inaugurated for the third time as president.

Mount Rushmore was completed.

A bill passed making the fourth Thursday in November as Thanksgiving Day.

Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7.

The first commercial aired on TV (Bulova watches).



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



Flying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative

**Keith Carnahan, President and CEO**  
MLEC Office Hours —  
Monday through Friday,  
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Hickman Office  
**Dwight Bates, District Manager**  
Phone: 931-729-3558  
After Hours, Holidays,  
Weekends: 1-800-482-6553  
(including Dyer Road)

Houston Office  
**Jeff Rye, District Manager**  
Phone: 931-289-3311  
After Hours, Holidays,  
Weekends: 1-800-650-6814

Humphreys Office  
**Carl Brazzle, District Manager**  
Phone: 931-296-2581  
After Hours, Holidays,  
Weekends: 1-800-893-8273

Lewis Office  
**Jason Graves, District Manager**  
Phone: 931-796-3116  
After Hours, Holidays,  
Weekends: 1-800-256-2807

Perry Office  
**Derle Hill, District Manager**  
Phone: 931-589-2151  
After Hours, Holidays,  
Weekends: 1-800-316-2342  
(including Pleasantville)

Featured this month  
in **Watt's Up** on  
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- Take a break from technology
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## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

### Giving something back

Many prefer to do business with companies based in their local communities. Some shop at home because the guy at the farmer's co-op knows them by name and their needs by heart. Some do it because local shops carry unique gifts we can't get anywhere else. Another reason is that these businesses put money back into the local community.

Member-owned, Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative is one example of that local commitment. We have put millions of dollars and worker hours into the communities we serve. Some of those ways are obvious — jobs, economic development loans, school contributions, etc. MLEC is one of the largest taxpayers in the five counties we serve. (Yes, we're not-for-profit; however, we pay taxes, too. In 2015, we paid \$1.3 million.)

Other ways MLEC invests in our local communities might not be as obvious but are just as important. For example, the programs in which we elect to partner with the Tennessee Valley Authority and CoBank help us put money in the local economy as well.

Did you notice that I said "elect?" I did so because we have the choice to leave these funds on the table. However, for MLEC, looking out for our members is what we do. We know the extra work these programs may create for our staff is nothing compared to the benefits they bring to those we serve.

As a TVA distributor, MLEC is not required to offer all available TVA programs. However, participating in those that make sense for our members is another way to make a difference.

Just looking at 2015 and the savings realized by MLEC's members through

in-house and TVA programs is impressive. In fact, some 350 members participated in at least one of our energy programs this past year. Through this, they earned \$64,000 in rebates from MLEC and TVA.

Also, the energy side of things has a big impact. Collectively, these members saved enough kilowatt-hours to provide energy to 800 average homes for a

month! Going forward, they'll be more aware of how to save energy and energy dollars. This helps control what we all pay for electricity. How so? If we use less energy, TVA can delay the costly need of building more power plants.

Another "elective" is MLEC's involvement in CoBank's Sharing Success matching grant. Together, we've awarded \$30,000 to area schools in three years. It is a blessing to make good on the cooperative

principles and aid education for our future members.

We also encourage students by bringing programs like the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's Youth Leadership Summit and Washington Youth Tour opportunities. This lets us take an active role in helping shape our future community leaders.

Since the 1930s, MLEC has delivered low-cost, safe, reliable power and a lot more to our members. We've worked to make your community a better place to live. This history of service and giving back to community is something we are obviously proud of. It is the cooperative way and the thing that sets us apart from other kinds of businesses.



**Keith Carnahan**  
*President and CEO,*  
*Meriwether Lewis Electric*  
*Cooperative*

*Keith*



# APRIL 11

# 2016

Remember as a child being afraid of the dark when the power went out? We could all say “yes” at least a couple of times in our lives. Somehow, the dark conjures ideas of the “boogeyman” or something moving in the corner or under the bed. We want the power to come back on quickly so we can feel safe again. Sometimes, even the power going out in the middle of the day can create an uneasy feeling.

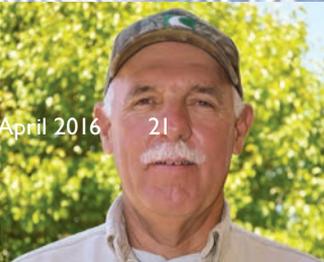
When the lights come back on, it is as if something magical happens, and in some ways that is true. It is made possible by a “dream team” of guys working hard behind the scenes to bring a sense of normalcy and security to our lives. They work swiftly, tirelessly and as safely as possible. Who are they?

Ironically, they are everyday heroes you know as the guy down the street or driving the big truck. They are your Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative linemen. They put their lives on the line — and on hold — every day to make sure your power is on or comes back quickly when problems arise.

They are available when the phone rings at 2:30 a.m. when a little more sleep would be welcome. Instead, as Smiley Miller’s song, “You Know the Kind,” states, they get up and are out the door because they know somewhere, someone needs them. Each time they do, their lives are on the line — literally.

We salute them and their commitment to those we serve every day, but it is especially important on April 11 — National Lineman Appreciation Day. If you would like to take a moment to share your appreciation on MLEC’s Facebook or Twitter pages, please consider using the #ThankALineman tag.

Clockwise from top left are Gary Cannon, Shane Lowery, Jason Garrison, Neal Buck, Stony Odom, Greg Hudgins, Troy Walton, Matt Lineberry, John Blair, Don Fitzhugh, Derrick O’Guin, Bobby Williams, Mike Hickerson, Michael Bradley, Nick Bush, Spencer Totty, Chris Carroll, David Qualls, Randal Anderson, Barry Wilson and Aaron Hinson.



# LINEMAN APPRECIATION

# Remember When

Nestled on the town square of Centerville is a little shop filled with all sorts of unique gifts and surprises for its customers. The floor space might be small, but they pack a lot within the walls of the shop known as Remember When.

When Linda Bates and her son established the shop in June 1995, their initial dream was to sell antiques.

“My son and I decided on the name Remember When because antiques come from another time,” says Linda. “We got our first pieces and were on our way. Fortunately and unfortunately, his CPA career took off. I knew very little about antiques, so, if I wanted to keep the store open, I knew I had to branch into other areas.”

Today, Remember When has four employees and is always looking for new and unusual items to offer its customers.

***“We take great pleasure when a customer remarks that he or she has not seen or been able to find anywhere else an item we carry. We are always looking for USA- and Tennessee-made products,” says Linda.***

The store has a wide variety of candles, glassware, collectibles, linens, kitchen items, men’s gifts, wallets and desk accessories. From jewelry and clocks, lamps, candy, body lotions and soaps to women’s clothing, you can always find that unique something that makes the perfect gift for yourself, a friend or family member. Gift wrap is free of charge on in-store purchases.

Remember When is located on the Centerville Square and open Monday-Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. You can call the store at 931-729-0052, and it has a Facebook page.



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Electric Cooperative**  
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# Commitment to Community

## Revolving Loan helps communities and businesses grow

Improving the quality of life in our communities takes more than saying, “We’re here to help.” It means coming up with ways to make an impact.

Recently, MLEC made a \$50,000 loan to Jennifer Keeton of Perry County to expand her established salon known in the area as The Spalon. The loan allows her to settle into a new location that’s more conducive to a spa atmosphere and offer more services to new and established clients.

The zero-interest loan is made possible by MLEC’s Revolving Loan Fund for businesses looking to expand and/or community services looking to grow.

As the loan is paid back, MLEC can reloan it for other economic development projects. The RLF was established in 1996 with co-op funds and a grant from the Rural Utilities Service. Since its inception, the RLF has awarded \$750,000 in the MLEC service area.



*The Spalon owner Jennifer Keeton is all smiles and excited about what the Revolving Loan she received from MLEC can help her bring to her clients in Perry and the surrounding counties. With her are MLEC Perry County directors Tommy Graham, left, and Ronny Averett.*

## PROJECT HELP: Giving to those in need, not just one time a year, but anytime

Project Help is an emergency assistance fund sponsored by Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative member-owners through voluntary contributions. It was created as a way for MLEC and its members to help ensure no one is without electricity during the year’s coldest months.

It is not intended to be an ongoing source of extra income but a *temporary* help for paying electric bills.

Since the program began more than a decade ago, MLEC members have donated thousands of dollars to help their neighbors in need. You can donate a dollar or more each month, and it will be added to your electric bill. Or, you can make a one-time donation. Funds stay in the county from which they are

received, and signing up to give is as easy as calling your MLEC office or emailing [power@mlec.com](mailto:power@mlec.com). It is really that simple to help someone.

Meriwether Lewis does not distribute the funds; local community action agencies determine eligibility and contact MLEC concerning who receives the funds. The agencies are:



### South Central

#### Human Resources Agency:

Hickman County, 931-729-5921

Lewis County, 931-796-4825

Perry County, 931-589-6316

### Highland Rim

#### Community Action Agency:

Humphreys County, 931-296-4098

Houston County, 931-289-4101

# Ways to save ...

Each month, Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative shares helpful tips from Energy Specialist Nathan Wagner. Using less energy is important for our environment, but it also translates to dollars saved on energy bills for our members. This month we're branching out like spring's budding trees to include other areas such as the environment and safety to inform our members about activities and resources available at MLEC. (It's what co-ops do!)

## ... with the environment



Earth Day reminds us we can make a difference for the environment, and MLEC supports that goal by offering tools and rebates members can use to be more energy-minded, save money and reduce their carbon footprints.

- **CFL recycling:** Each MLEC community lobby has a safe, convenient way to dispose of household CFLs. Our drop-off buckets are an easy way to support community recycling efforts.
- **Green Power Switch:** This program lets MLEC members support the Tennessee Valley Authority's efforts to produce energy through renewable resources. Buying two blocks of green power for a year is the environment's equivalent of planting an acre of trees.
- **Free audits:** Homeowners can take advantage of MLEC's free energy audits to determine where their energy dollars are going and simple ways to save. Helping our members make a difference in their homes is a natural step for MLEC.
- **Home, sweet home:** Home is also the perfect place to start protecting our environment. MLEC utilizes technology and innovative ways to meet the changes of our evolving industry in disposing of equipment and being conscious of our actions.

## ... with Wagner



Spring has sprung, and summer is not far behind. Saving energy for our wallets and the environment is easy with simple, tried-and-true energy tips:

- When was the last time you changed your heat pump filter? Changing it each month when you receive your electric bill is a good rule of thumb. Think of it like this: A dirty filter makes your unit work harder, which means it uses more kilowatts. Translation? The harder your unit works, the more you are paying on your energy bill. MLEC's free home delivery filter program can help.
- A hot shower in the winter may be a thing of comfort, but a long one adds up the money going down the drain. Now that spring is here and showers are more frequent, make sure your water heater temperature is no higher than 120 degrees, and limit shower length to five to seven minutes. If your water heater needs to be replaced with a newer model, check the unit's energy rating, and remember: MLEC offers rebates.
- With the arrival of daylight saving time, homeowners have the opportunity to cash in on more natural sunlight to brighten rooms of their homes. Turn off unnecessary lights to save on lighting costs. You can also switch to LEDs or CFLs to save when the switch is "on."

*"Whether your goal is to save energy or energy dollars, the thing to remember is that doing a little can save a lot. Everything you do — from flipping a switch to upgrading to CFLs — can add up to big savings." —Nathan Wagner, MLEC Energy Specialist*

## ... with safety

Planting a new tree or shrub? Getting ready to bury a water line? For your safety and service reliability, please contact MLEC first to determine if any underground power cables are in the vicinity. Let's repeat together, now: "Before digging, pushing pipe, trenching or plowing, call MLEC to keep everyone involved safe."

# Providing more than energy

## MLEC Adopt-A-School grant brings excitement to education

As a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, one of Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative's core values is commitment to community. Businesses and homeowners benefit from programs we offer, and so do area schools. We believe students are the future and work hard to make programs available that will enhance their learning experience. One such program is MLEC's Adopt-A-School Grant.

Started in 1994, this program makes grants available each year for area teachers. It is intended to supplement funding for specific, innovative educational programs being introduced or established in the classroom. Teachers apply, and winners are selected by a committee of local MLEC employees.

Historically, we have made \$1,000 available in each county. However, with the help of a matching grant from our partners at CoBank, a national cooperative bank, we have been able to double that amount for the past few years. We awarded \$10,000 for education in 2015, truly a cooperative effort!

One of the two \$1,000 grant recipients for Hickman County is physics teacher Vicki Chessor. She teaches 10th-12th-graders by spending half of the school year at East Hickman High and the remainder at Hickman High. Her grant application outlined how giving students access to the Science World magazine was a valuable resource in helping improve ACT scores. It supports STEM education, comes with online resources and makes science relevant and engaging.

"Several years ago, our Science Department had access to the magazine; however, because of a lack of funds, the subscription was discontinued," explains Chessor, in her 25th year of teaching. "This is an excellent supplemental tool because it uses graphs to help students practice data interpretation, which is absolutely essential to improving ACT scores. It also uses a combination of text and graphics, encourages critical thinking and gives valuable insight into jobs in the science field."

Also mindful of junior high students preparing for future ACT testing, Chessor used her grant wisely to

purchase subscriptions not only for each high school but also each middle school in the county. An estimated 1,200 students will benefit from the MLEC grant.

"Parents know that better ACT scores mean scholarships," says Chessor. "But students just love the magazine, not thinking about the benefits. I'm grateful for MLEC's grant because it helps enrich science education."

Hickman County's other \$1,000 grant winner, Stacia Anglin of East Hickman High School, is purchasing materials that will help students select career paths, determine what education is needed for those careers and be better prepared as they graduate from high school.



Top: Students Ben Gilbert, left, and Taylor Benz, right, look at the latest Science World with MLEC District Manager Dwight Bates and physics teacher Vicki Chessor. Bottom: Students in this physics class at Hickman County High School have their hands full for learning.

# Service from faces you know



*James Breeden  
District Operating Supervisor*

Change is sometimes warranted to meet the evolving needs of those you serve. Such is the case at Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative. To help balance workload and service to our members, James “Junior” Breeden has been promoted to district operating supervisor in Humphreys County.

A former lineman, Junior will directly oversee the line crew and provide other assistance as needed in a number of areas.

“Junior’s personality and experience in the field will be great assets as he supervises the crews and works more closely with our members,” says Vice President of Employee and Member Services Miranda McCaleb.

A longtime resident of Waverly, Breeden has 20 years of service at MLEC.

## Stepping up to the plate for service

Aside from delivering safe, low-cost, reliable electricity, Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative always strives to deliver a home-run with quality member service. Sometimes, this requires a policy or procedure change. However, technology and innovation can help us better meet member needs. Stepping up to the plate is a natural action for cooperatives. Here are some changes coming May 1:

### **Due-date change**

MLEC has the technology in place to provide members a longer period to make payment before a late fee is assessed. Account due dates are being extended up to four days. We realize this might be a welcome change for some but could be less beneficial for others. Therefore, if a different date better suits your family’s needs, members can change their due date once in a 12-month period.

### **Deposit changes**

- Deposits will be required of all new members in all classifications of service.
- A residential account deposit will be \$275. (Previously, it was \$150 for landowners and \$300 for those who don’t own the land.)
- A letter of credit from a previous utility showing 12 months of good credit history can now be accepted in lieu of a cash deposit.

- For hardship cases, the deposit can be made in three installments. Examples include documented medical hardship, unemployment for more than six months, severe or catastrophic loss of the home due to fire and weather- or storm-related problems.
- General Power Rate account deposits will be calculated at two times the highest monthly bill for existing accounts and an estimated bill for new accounts.
- For qualifying accounts, accrued interest on the cash deposit will show as a credit on the January statement.

### **Disconnection in extreme temperatures**

To deliver better service, MLEC is changing the policy regarding disconnection in extreme temperatures. Previously, only a minimum temperature was listed in policy form to delay disconnections. While we also considered high temperatures in our disconnect process, it was not addressed in the policy. This has been corrected to state that disconnects will be subject to an extreme temperature guideline set at 32 degrees and below or 95 degrees and above.

Contact your local MLEC office or see your May 2016 billing statement for additional details.

Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative

MLEC is member-owned and prides itself in providing safe, low-cost, reliable electricity. We are also committed to improving the quality of life in the communities we serve and pairing innovation and technology to meet the evolving needs of our members.



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April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## #ThankALineman

**W**ith the arrival of spring, we begin talking about storms and how you can take easy steps to make sure you're prepared. In the coming weeks, you'll be seeing some of those tips on our Facebook page and Twitter, but if you miss those, they're always available at [mtemc.com](http://mtemc.com).

Those spring storms bring to mind the potential for outages across the service territory. While we constantly focus on the reliability of our system, we understand that outages will happen. Fortunately, we have our crews — the best of the best — ready to respond, day or night, when those outages occur.

I'm happy to share with you that Monday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day. The federal government designated it as an annual day of recognition three years ago, and I'm so glad it did.

When the lights are on, it's easy to take for granted how the power got there. There is a lot that goes into it, but the tireless efforts of our crews are due a lot

of the credit. In the heat of the summer and the cold of the winter, our linemen are committed to providing a comfort we all use daily. In the middle of the night, when a tree falls on a power line, a car accident damages one of our poles or an animal makes an unfortunate decision and comes in contact with our equipment, our linemen get the call. When things are at their worst, linemen are usually at their best.

These parents, spouses, siblings and children often sacrifice their own family time to ensure power is flowing for you and the other members of our cooperative.

I encourage you to thank our linemen for the job they do — say thank you if you see them, give them a thumbs-up when you drive by a crew that's working or

comment on our Lineman Appreciation Day Facebook post.

And if you lose power during a terrible storm, think about those who serve you, working in harsh conditions to keep your power flowing. I hope such thoughts will give you confidence, comfort and appreciation.

I'm proud to call them my teammates in service.



Chris Jones  
President,  
Middle Tennessee  
Electric  
Membership  
Corporation

### Restoring power, day or night

*At right, line crews from the Franklin office work in August 2014 to restore power under the light of the moon. Rain or shine, day or night, our linemen work to ensure the reliability of the system. April 11 is national Lineman Appreciation Day, so be sure to #ThankALineman!*



# \$5.2 million paid to communities

**M**iddle Tennessee Electric recently paid \$5.2 million in taxes to the communities it serves.

Each year, the electric cooperative pays an ad valorem tax, which is based on the assessed value of MTEM's infrastructure, including buildings, substations, transformers, poles and lines.

MTEM's tax payment was the largest in Rutherford County, where the cooperative paid \$1,919,256 in total taxes to the county. Tax payments were also

made to Smyrna for \$75,366, LaVergne for \$7,042 and Eagleville for \$2,940.

In addition, ad valorem taxes were paid to Williamson County, \$1,285,251; Wilson County, \$1,152,198; and Cannon County, \$235,220.

Middle Tennessee Electric also paid taxes to four counties where it had a smaller infrastructure presence. DeKalb County was paid \$12,793; Maury, \$13,920; Smith, \$3,383; and Trousdale, \$4,757.

In total, MTEM paid \$5,255,992 across its service territory.



*MTEM President Chris Jones, left, delivers a check for \$1,919,256 to Rutherford County Trustee Teb Batey.*

## Is your home ready for warmer weather?

**S**pring is upon us, and now is the perfect time to prepare for warm weather. Last fall, Middle Tennessee Electric provided members with timely tips to help keep the heat in while reducing energy consumption, so with warmer weather coming, it's time to make sure you're ready.

Warm-weather preparation is very similar to cold-weather measures, so you may be familiar with some of this information:

- One of the best tips we can pass along is to have your heating and air-conditioning unit inspected and serviced. A unit that isn't running properly will significantly increase your bill.

- Another easy tip is to take the eScore self audit via our website. This simple, quick process will help you identify areas in your home that are less than efficient and will provide you options for making improvements.

- Set your thermostat as high as comfortably possible in the summer. The smaller the difference between the indoor and outdoor temperatures,

the lower your overall cooling bill will be.

- Keep your house warmer than normal when you are away, and lower the thermostat setting to 78 degrees only when you are at home and need cooling. A programmable thermostat can make it easy to set back your temperature.

- If you use air conditioning, a ceiling fan will allow you to raise the thermostat setting about 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort.

- Turn off ceiling fans when you leave the room. Remember that fans cool people, not rooms, by creating a wind chill effect.

- When you shower or take a bath, use the bathroom fan to remove the heat and humidity from your home. Make sure bathroom and kitchen fans are vented to the outside (not just to the attic).



- Seal cracks and openings to prevent warm air from leaking into your home.

- Add caulk or weatherstripping to seal air leaks around doors and windows.

For more tips, visit [www.mtemc.com](http://www.mtemc.com).

## Let's take a closer look:

**T**he second Monday of April has been designated as National Lineman Appreciation Day, so what better subject for this month's feature than the linemen of Middle Tennessee Electric?

MTEMC linemen work in all types of weather, performing daily maintenance projects and also quickly responding to outages 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

"Linemen across our service territory work every day building and repairing lines, ensuring the overall reliability of the system," said MTEMC President Chris Jones. "They are also the unsung heroes who stand ready to respond to outages caused by storms, accidents or anything else that may knock out the power. They are the ones who, through their tireless efforts, help ensure the system reliability of your member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative."

As the backbone of the cooperative, the work of a lineman is not only rewarding but demanding and dangerous.

Linemen from MTEMC and across the state were put to the test during the ice storm of 2015.

"The ice storm provided a number of challenging obstacles for our linemen to navigate," said Donny Parker, MTEMC senior safety coordinator. "In some cases, linemen had to pack in their tools to restore power, but they train for all types of situations, so they were prepared to do whatever was needed in order to restore power."

That training keeps linemen ready to respond to situations beyond keeping power flowing to the membership. Sometimes, they have to respond to life-changing events.

In December of last year, Lebanon first-year apprentice lineman Rusty George and Lebanon lineman/serviceman Jon Blankenship were completing daily jobs when they came upon a vehicle accident that involved a Wilson County Sheriff's Deputy. They immediately rendered aid, George beginning CPR with the assistance of Blankenship, and were able to revive and stabilize the deputy until medical personnel arrived.

"Their actions saved the life of that deputy," said Parker. "Each and every day our crews are working, they do so with safety in mind — not just their safety but the safety of those around them. Being able to spring into action and to fall back on their training kept that individual alive."

While stories like this are remarkable, the daily job linemen do requires close attention to safety. To do so, linemen are equipped with safety gear as well as their tools of the trade.

"Every piece of equipment used by our linemen is a necessary tool," said Parker. "Whether they are climbing a pole or working from a bucket truck, they only carry what they need."

Weight and accessibility are two reasons linemen take limited tools with them. But unnecessary pieces of equipment pose a safety risk.

"The voltage that runs through the lines can be fatal if safety procedures are not followed," said Parker. "At the end of the day, we want everyone to get home safely."

With the onset of spring and storm preparation across the MTEMC service territory taking place, we encourage you to take the time to thank our linemen because they are braving the elements to keep your power flowing.

# Your M

## An MTEMC lineman's gear:

**T**ravis Scharber, journeyman lineman, works in MTEMC's Murfreesboro office. During his day-to-day work, he routinely utilizes many of the pieces you see at right.

- 1. Hard hat and safety glasses:** A hard hat protects against electrical hazards and falling objects, and safety glasses protect a lineman's eyes.
- 2. Insulated gloves:** Insulated rubber gloves protect against electric shock and burn injuries.
- 3. Climbers/hooks and gaffs:** Contoured leg shafts are made of aluminum or steel, and the gaffs on the ends help linemen climb poles.
- 4. Hot stick:** The hot stick is used by linemen when they are at the top of a pole to install or remove clamps and to open and close switches.
- 5. Fire-resistant clothing:** This clothing self-extinguishes if it catches fire and helps reduce burns.
- 6. Buckingham climbing belt:** This piece of equipment helps linemen safely climb poles and eliminates the risk of falling.
- 7. Ditty bag:** This bag is used to hold connectors, nuts, bolts and any small object a lineman may need when working.
- 8. Secondary safety:** Linemen use secondary safeties to prevent them from falling when they are maneuvering over attachments on poles.
- 9. Handline and block:** A rope and block enable the lineman to hoist up lines, hardware and equipment.

# TEMC linemen

**10. Tool pouch:** Another item attached to a lineman's tool belt, this one typically holds 9-inch line pliers, a crescent wrench,

channel locks, screwdriver and any other necessary tools.  
**11. Supersqueeze fall protection:** This primary fall protector

wraps around the pole and, should a fall occur, prevents the lineman from dropping to the ground.



Photo by Cory Edmonds

# Energizing our communities

In late January, Middle Tennessee Electric — in conjunction with the city of Franklin, the Tennessee Valley Authority and Energy Source Partners — energized a 1,000 kW solar field at Franklin’s Waste Water Management Plant on Claude Yates Drive.

The new solar field, which has 3,020 solar panels and sits on five acres behind the plant, is adjacent to the 200 kW system that was commissioned in 2012.

“It’s exciting to see the demand and growth for solar power in our service territory,” MTEMC Energy Efficiency Demand Response Coordinator Todd Palmer said. “This is one of three 1 megawatt solar fields in various planning stages to be brought online over the next year or two.”

Through its renewable energy programs and alongside the Tennessee Valley Authority, MTEMC offers developers the opportunity to design renewable energy generation sites larger than 50 kW and sell the energy back to TVA.

“Being able to offer programs like these is one more way we strive to meet the needs of all of our members,” said Palmer.



From left, Energy Source Partners President Ron Merville, MTEMC Energy Efficiency Demand Response Coordinator Todd Palmer, MTEMC Working Service Foreman Danny Crawford and Franklin Principal Planner Andrew Orr see the city of Franklin’s new 1 megawatt solar field energized and brought on-line.

For more information on renewable energy programs offered by MTEMC and TVA, visit [www.mtemc.com](http://www.mtemc.com).

## Solar paying off at Smyrna airport

As a part of the Green Power Providers Program, Middle Tennessee Electric, in conjunction with the Tennessee Valley Authority, offers residents and businesses the opportunity to design renewable energy generation sites smaller than 50 kW and sell the energy back to TVA. Twice a year, the cooperative returns the excess solar generation credits, which appear on monthly bills, back to the

members participating in the program when they accrue positive balances.

“We currently have more than 140 members participating in the Green Power Providers Program,” Palmer said. “We expect to add another 20 sites by year’s end. In addition, we also have several 1 megawatt solar facilities that are moving forward and will be on-line in the next year or two.”



Middle Tennessee Electric Energy Efficiency Demand Response Coordinator Todd Palmer, left, presents a check to Smyrna/Rutherford County Airport Authority Executive Director John Black.

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# SharingChange Spotlight



Photo by Kevin Wimpy

## FEBRUARY GRANTS

Habitat for Humanity  
Williamson-Maury  
Williamson – \$10,000

Mercy Community  
Healthcare  
Williamson – \$9,325

Arrington Volunteer  
Fire Department  
Williamson – \$10,000

Salvation Army  
of Murfreesboro  
Rutherford – \$10,000

Cannon County SAVE  
Cannon – \$2,500

St. Thomas  
Stones River Hospital  
Cannon – \$1,250

Building Youth Partnerships  
Rutherford – \$1,250

TOTAL GRANTS:

**\$33,050**

## Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury

Habitat for Humanity Williamson-Maury will be partnering with Anyiir Aguto and her family to build a home in Franklin, thanks in part to funding from SharingChange. Aguto is a survivor of the civil war that took place in Sudan nearly 30 years ago and serves on the board of the Lost Boys Foundation, an organization that provides opportunities for the Lost Boys of Sudan in the Nashville area.

SharingChange is a foundation created by Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation's board of directors for the sole purpose of giving back to the communities served by the cooperative. Funds granted by the foundation come directly from members and are then used in the county where they are collected.

Concern for Community, the Seventh Cooperative Principle, focuses on members' needs while

helping develop the communities served.

Since 2003, MTEMC's charitable foundations have distributed more than \$8 million to more than 550 organizations in our communities. For more information, visit our website at [www.SharingChange.org](http://www.SharingChange.org).

SharingChange is a voluntary program, and members have the option to discontinue participation at any time.

## FEBRUARY GRANTS BY COUNTY



WILLIAMSON  
**\$29,300**

Beginning balance ....\$54,848.73  
Incoming .....\$29,964.73  
Funds Available .....\$84,813.46  
Ending balance\* .....\$55,513.46

WILSON  
**\$0**

Beginning balance ...\$155,775.02  
Incoming .....\$17,964.24  
Funds Available .....\$173,739.26  
Ending balance\* .....\$173,739.26

RUTHERFORD  
**\$4,500**

Beginning balance ....\$57,212.02  
Incoming .....\$20,528.78  
Funds Available .....\$77,740.80  
Ending balance\* .....\$73,240.80

CANNON  
**\$4,250**

Beginning balance .....\$9,665.15  
Incoming .....\$2,187.13  
Funds Available .....\$11,852.28  
Ending balance\* .....\$7,602.28

\*Ending balance is awaiting future grant applications.

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# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

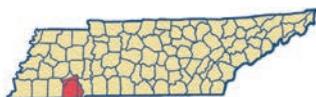
Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time





*Serving members  
in all of McNairy County  
and portions of Chester,  
Hardeman and Hardin  
counties in Tennessee  
and Alcorn and  
Tishomingo  
counties in Mississippi*



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**Web site:**

**[www.pickwickec.com](http://www.pickwickec.com)**

**These seven pages  
contain local news  
and information  
for members of  
Pickwick Electric  
Cooperative.**

# Critical connections behind the power

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it's appropriate that we

take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgement. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — there is a lot more work taking place behind the scenes.

### *The power behind your power*

As president of Pickwick Electric Cooperative, I'm similar to the head coach of a team, ensuring that all the employees know their roles and perform them at a high level. I also must recruit and retain talent. This is an especially challenging responsibility in today's highly competitive hiring environment.

### *Promoting a culture of safety*

The Operations and Engineering departments ensure that the overall system is well maintained. This team

is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. An equally important area of focus is safety. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count

on the Operations and Engineering departments for ensuring they have access to everything from lighting to heating and cooling and so much more.

### *Calling for energy efficiency*

Customer service representatives and our energy advisor answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. They are responsible for ensuring that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the time you sign up for membership.

### *Delivering timely savings*

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of Pickwick



**John Bowers**

*President,*

*Pickwick Electric*

*Cooperative*

*[jbowers@pickwick-electric.com](mailto:jbowers@pickwick-electric.com)*

Electric Cooperative. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail, often on a date that you have specified. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are still a business. As such, the Accounting and Finance Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the money we pay for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employee salaries and other expenditures.

The Human Resources and Communications Department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. This department handles recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to

our members. For example, Pickwick Electric Cooperative sponsors youth leadership seminars and an educational trip to Washington, D.C., as part of the co-op's Youth Tour program each summer.

This department is also responsible for the co-op's annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools, and communications such as this local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

### *Staying in sync*

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart. From sponsoring local youth to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. And it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, more than 900 electric co-ops, including Pickwick Electric Cooperative, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

---

## Is your coffee maker compatible with your home's wiring?

**T**he coffee maker in your kitchen might not be safe to use at home. How can you know? Look at how the safety organization UL has rated the appliance: for commercial or residential use.

A commercially rated coffee maker is likely to be a sturdier appliance than the one you need for your kitchen. That sounds good, but if you use it in your kitchen, it could stress your electrical wiring designed for less-robust devices.

In fact, the coffee maker manufacturer Keurig will not honor the warranty on a commercial coffee maker that is used at home. It also won't

stand by the warranty on a home coffee maker if you set it up at the office.

Especially when used in an older home, a commercial coffee maker could trip your circuit breaker, overheat or even cause a fire. Plus, the coffee maker itself is likely to have a shorter life if it's used at home where the wiring isn't up to powering a commercial appliance.

Your best bet when replacing your coffee maker: Buy one labeled for household use if you intend to use it at home. And stick with those rated for commercial use if you plan to use it in an office or commercial building.

# Deadlines for filing director nominating petitions

**P**ickwick Electric Cooperative by-laws, Section 4.06(a). Nominations for directors was amended on Sept. 11, 2014, at the annual membership meeting. The bylaw reads as follows:

*In order for a member to become a qualified candidate for election as director, he or she must file with the Secretary of the Cooperative, or a duly appointed representative, a written petition nominating such person as a candidate and signed by not less than twenty-five (25) then qualified and eligible voting members in the voting district. The qualifying petition must be filed by May 1 of the year in which the term of the incumbent Director expires, or in the case of a vacancy pursuant to Section 4.10 hereof, not less than twenty (20) days prior to the date of the Special Meeting, if required. A member so qualified shall be an eligible candidate to be voted for in the district election without further nomination. There shall be no nomination of other candidates from the floor. Voting shall be by written ballot supplied by the Credentials and Election Committee. If the member petitioned is not present, such member shall not be accepted by the Chairman unless the Chairman has in hand a written statement from such member stating his or her willingness to serve as Director if elected.*

*The candidates must meet the qualifications for Directors as follows:*

- *Must be a member and reside in the district he/she is to represent.*
- *Must not be employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative or a business substantially engaged in selling electrical or plumbing appliances, fixtures or supplies to members of the cooperative.*
- *Must not be the incumbent of or candidate for an elective public office in connection with which a salary is paid.*
- *When a membership is held jointly by a husband and wife, either one, but not both, may be elected director, provided both meet all the qualifications for a director.*

Cooperative bylaws contain complete information concerning the election of directors and are available at the PEC office. Blank petitions for nominating a director can also be picked up at the cooperative office.

The three-year terms for directors in districts 1 (Enville), 3 (Counce) and 8 (Stantonville) will expire this year.

Anyone seeking the candidacy of director should call the PEC office to verify the district in which he or she lives.

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## *Heat and humidity vs. dry heat*

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## *Heat reduction is priority No. 1*

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## *Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates*

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum

efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## *DIY humidity reduction*

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockage. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, contact our energy experts at 731-645-3411.

*Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# Plant a tree on Earth Day

**E**arth Day is on Friday, April 22, this year, and it's the perfect day to plant a tree. Earth Day organizers encourage everyone to plant trees wherever they can: in parks, in their neighborhoods or in their own yards.

If you plant a tree in your yard, choose a strategic location that will allow the tree to shade your home from the hot summer sun. As it grows, the tree will help reduce your air conditioning bills and keep your home more comfortable.

Some tips from the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees on the west and northwest sides of your home will shade the building during mid- to late afternoons.
- Keep branches pruned enough that they don't block your view when you look out of west-facing windows.
- Shade trees along driveways and patios will keep you cooler while you're outside. The shade keeps the concrete and your yard cooler.
- Protect your outdoor air conditioning unit from weather-related wear and tear by planting a shade tree nearby. The less direct sunlight that hits the unit, the more efficiently it will run all summer.

## Keep safety in mind when planting



*We all enjoy our trees, but when they interfere with power lines, reliability and safety are compromised. Think ahead when planting trees and shrubs; new plantings are not allowed in the right of way.*

# Smart appliances offer convenience but have a ways to go

By Tom Tate

It seems like everything is “smart” these days: cars, the grid, watches, houses, phones and appliances. When I hear the term “smart appliance,” the Jetsons — with their fully automated home — immediately come to mind. Dinner was cooked, laundry done and dishes washed by a smart machine.

In reality, smart appliances utilize modern communications technology to make functions faster, cheaper and more energy-efficient.

The annual Consumer Electronics Show features more smart appliances every year. Refrigerators, stoves and ovens, freezers, washers and dryers, garage door openers, dishwashers, water heaters — the wave is coming.

Even though today’s smart appliances can give many of us sticker shock, experts predict that these new technologies will deliver major benefits in energy efficiency, convenience and maintenance. So what makes today’s smart appliances stand out from others?

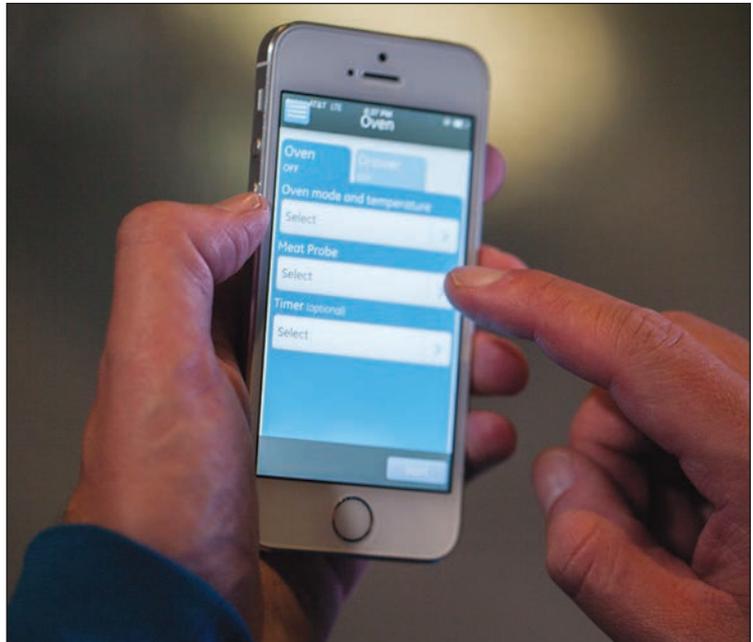
From the smart screen on your dazzling new refrigerator, you can check the weather while grabbing your orange juice. You can even browse the Internet for recipes — all on the conveniently placed touchscreen.

Remotely monitor your oven to turn it on and adjust temperatures. Running late at work and need to get the kids somewhere? Stop for a frozen pizza on the way home, and preheat the oven so you can pop it in upon arrival. That’s pretty neat. And, of course, the panic moment while winging off on vacation of, “Did I leave the oven on?” will be a thing of the past.

Have a load of clothes in the washer you forgot to start? Log in and start the cycle from the golf course.

How about this one? Wi-Fi-connected appliances with clocks will reset themselves for Daylight Saving Time! One less digital device to tinker with twice a year.

Eventually, I see smart appliances becoming extremely useful to the average homeowner. A refrigerator that reads the bar codes of what you put in and tracks consumption could recommend a shopping list if it notices something getting low or out of date. No



*GE introduces its first free-standing ranges with Wi-Fi capability that allows consumers to control their ovens while away from home via the GE Brillion™ mobile app. Photograph courtesy of General Electric*

more cracking open the milk to sniff for freshness. I can go for that!

Maintenance is an area of huge potential. Let’s say one of your smart appliances is feeling sickly. One day it may call the manufacturer and get a diagnosis. You won’t have to wait at home for a technician who may or may not find the problem — or have the right parts. With your permission, the tech can show up to your home with everything needed to make the repair. How convenient that will be!

Finally, from an energy-efficiency and load-management point of view, smart appliances present an opportunity to manage energy load more discreetly in the quest to give co-op members the highest possible quality of service at the lowest possible price. Sure, the Jetsons’ flying car is a long way off — but not their appliances.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



**F**lying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time





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Oneida, TN 37841

**CEO/General Manager**

Dave Cross

**Office Hours**

Monday through Friday  
7:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Oneida Office**

Phone: 569-8591

**Wartburg Office**

Phone: 346-3699

**Board of Directors**

**Jim Litton**, President

**Tim Freels**, Vice President

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**Steve Lambert**, Scott County

**To report an outage or electrical emergency, call:**

**Scott County: 569-8591**

**Morgan County: 346-3699**



AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Running with the 'Little Guys'

When my wife, Cheryl, and I officially embarked on our life together back in 1984, I really wasn't too keen on having children immediately. Like most selfish young men, my focus was solely on me. When I finally came around to Cheryl's way of thinking about three and a half years later, I soon found out that there were some things that were beyond my control.

For the next three and a half years, we journeyed from presumption to despair as we sought to find out why Cheryl couldn't get pregnant. We underwent every test imaginable and had even began to contact adoption agencies.

So when the Lord allowed Cheryl to become pregnant with Rachel back in 1991, we were pretty much determined at that point to have as large a family as we could. As the children began to arrive like clockwork throughout the 1990s — Samuel in 1993, Joseph in 1995, Hannah in 1997, Benjamin in 1999 and Lily Rose in 2001 — we became accustomed to a lot of looks everywhere we went and a lot of questions.

It was a very special time in our lives and a time that we will never

forget. But as anyone with any experience at all can tell you, life never stays the same.



Dave Cross  
CEO,  
Plateau Electric  
Cooperative

Our little family quickly expanded to overflowing, and we experienced several years with a bustling household with lots of laughter, lots of stress and crazy schedules. We're now experiencing the same in reverse. One by one, our little band is scattering out and choosing their own paths in life. At the

time I pen this, Rachel is working full time and finishing graduate school at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, while Sam is becoming acclimated to his new major (secondary education, biology) at Tennessee Tech and his apartment-sharing roommate, Joe, is undergoing Ranger Club training for Army ROTC. We hear a lot at home about our boys' efforts to peacefully co-exist in a semi-independent household.

Meanwhile, on the home front, Cheryl and I are struggling with the reality of a relatively "quiet" household with our three remaining teenagers at home. I know that three teens may not seem quiet to most people, but I've learned that it all depends on your perspective.

We've always unofficially referred to the three oldest as the "Big

Ones” or the “Big Guys” and to the younger group as the “Little Ones” or the “Little Guys.” Lately, with the “Big Guys” away from home, we’ve naturally had more time to focus on the “Little Guys.” It’s a good thing, too, as I realize that our time with them at home is rapidly drawing to a close.

Hannah will be graduating from Roane State this spring and has blossomed into quite the character as she’s matured. I’ve come to depend on her, to solicit her advice at times. And, most of all, I’ve learned to appreciate her greatly.

Benjamin has shot up to well beyond my height and is completing his sophomore year at Scott High. Though he has lived in the shadow of his older brothers for years, I’ve watched Benjamin grow into a

much more confident young man for whom I’m very thankful. Befitting his name, he truly has become “the son of my right hand.”

And Lily Rose, our baby, is finishing up middle school at Robbins Elementary. I’ve struggled as the little girl who just a few short years ago was always in her dad’s lap has turned into a petite young lady who not only looks beautiful in a formal dress but also never shies away from contact on the basketball court.

Life does change. Our challenge is to change with it and to appreciate where we are today. And today, I’m very pleased to be running with the “Little Guys.”

— Dave

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## Report from the boardroom

**W**e hope you find this report on recent discussions and decisions from Plateau Electric Cooperative’s board of directors both informative and helpful in your better understanding the operation of your cooperative.

**At the January regular board meeting,** the Finance Committee reported on its review of the Key Ratio Trend Analysis, which compared the cooperative’s financial performance to other systems across the state, throughout the Tennessee Valley and nationally. The board approved a new master contract with computer billing services provider Central Services Association. CEO Dave Cross reported that he had reached an agreement with an adjacent landowner to provide additional access to the new Morgan County pole yard property. The management staff discussed the state’s proposal to install a large solar array at the Morgan County Regional

Correctional Facility. Lastly, Joel McCartt gave an update on the status of the digitized mapping project.

**At a Special board meeting in January,** Cross and the management staff reviewed the 2016 operating budget and the 2016 strategic plan with the directors.

**At the February regular board meeting,** Robbie Ansary was present to give an update on the Tennessee Valley Authority. The Ad Hoc Committee reported on their recommendation toward the Operation Pocket Change program in light of the Tennessee attorney general’s opinion regarding those programs across the state. Cross informed the board of directors of the status of the Morgan County pole yard project. The board reviewed the normal monthly financial reports and heard a review of the cooperative’s safety program. Cross reported on plans to continue the spraying of right of way during 2016. An update was also given on the digitized mapping project.

# Official Notice

2016 Plateau Electric Cooperative Annual Membership Meeting

Saturday, May 7, 2016

Plateau Electric Cooperative office, Oneida

10-11 a.m. — Registration

11 a.m. — Business meeting

## *Annual meeting order of business:*

1. Report on the number of members present in order to determine the existence of a quorum.
2. Reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of the due publication or mailing thereof or the waivers of notice of meeting, as the case may be.
3. Reading of unapproved minutes of previous meetings of the members and the taking of necessary action thereon.
4. Presentation and consideration of reports of officers, directors and committees.
5. Unfinished business.
6. New business.
7. Adjournment.

All registered members and families are invited to have chicken dinner immediately following the meeting.

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## Directors' election — Saturday, May 21, 2016

9 a.m.-4 p.m.\*

**O**n Saturday, May 21, Plateau Electric Cooperative will conduct its annual election of directors at the cooperative's main office in Oneida and at the Plateau EC Wartburg District office. Morgan County residents will vote at the Wartburg office, and Scott County residents will vote at the Oneida office.

Three directors' positions will be voted on by the membership. Scott County and Oneida residents can vote for both the inside Oneida position and the outside Oneida position. Morgan County residents can vote for only the Morgan County position. Each director serves a three-year term. As of this printing, those running for office are:

Scott County (inside Oneida)  
Brian Boyatt (incumbent)

Scott County (outside Oneida)  
Lee Armstrong (incumbent)

Morgan County  
Harry Gosnell (incumbent)

\* If a candidate in either voting precinct is unopposed, the hours of the election at that precinct will be 9 a.m. to noon.

# Central High School students attend Youth Leadership Summit

**S**avannah Swanger and Jordan Layne from Central High School represented Plateau Electric Cooperative at the Youth Leadership Summit in Nashville March 21-23.



Savannah Swanger



Jordan Layne

The Youth Leadership Summit is a three-day event sponsored by PEC and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. Savannah and Jordan joined 42 peers from across the state to learn about leadership and the role of electric cooperatives at the state level. Each year,

teachers and counselors choose students based on their outstanding leadership abilities, academics and character inside and outside of the classroom to attend Youth Leadership Summit.

Activities at this year's event included touring the State Capitol, attending House and Senate

Committee meetings at Legislative Plaza, team-building exercises and a learning session about how to organize a cooperative.

Congratulations to these fine students.

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## Walk to stop domestic violence and child abuse

**T**he 2016 Nancy Swain Watters Walk for domestic violence and child abuse awareness will take place Friday, April 15.

Registration begins at 8 a.m., and the opening ceremony will commence at 9 a.m. at the Oneida Municipal Building. Funds from the event will benefit the Children's Center and the Scott County Women's Shelter.

Entry fee for the five-mile walk is \$35, which includes a shirt and backpack. The walk will begin at

the Oneida Municipal Building and end in the Plateau Electric Cooperative parking lot.

If you would like to participate in the walk, you can make a donation at [www.childrenscenterofthecumberlands.org](http://www.childrenscenterofthecumberlands.org) or by mail at P.O. Box 4314, Oneida, TN 37841. If you donate online or by check, please make a notation that your contribution is for the Nancy Swain Watters Walk.

If you have questions or need help making a contribution, contact Debbie White at 423-569-8900.



Hundreds participated in or attended last year's Nancy Swain Watters Walk to raise funds to aid in the prevention of domestic violence and child abuse. This year's event on Friday, April 15, will begin at 9 a.m. at the Oneida Municipal Building and end at Plateau Electric Cooperative.

# PEC makes two new hires

**P**lateau Electric Cooperative is pleased to welcome two new employees.

New mechanic Billy Young was most recently employed by the Tennessee College of Applied Technology in Knoxville as a diesel mechanic instructor for the past four years. In the 10 years prior to that, he worked at W.W. Windle Trucking and was a self-employed mechanic for two years before that.

Billy and his wife, Stacey, have three children — Morgan, 16, Zoie-Anne, 12, and Nathan, 8 — and live in Oneida.

Billy says he is looking forward to being closer to home and spending more time with his family.



Billy Young



Casey Fritts

Journeyman lineman Casey Fritts began his career in tree trimming for Wolf Tree Experts before working for Harriman Utility Board where he earned his journeyman lineman certificate from the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association. After seven years with the utility board, Casey took a position

with Y-12 in Oak Ridge as a journeyman lineman.

Casey and his wife, Aleshia, have two children: Haley, 10, and Tripp, 4.

Casey enjoys raccoon hunting and is president of the Morgan County Coon Hunting Association. He also likes spending time with his family and coaching his son's rec league football team and helping with his daughter's travel softball team.

# Plateau Electric pays ad valorem taxes

**A**d valorem payments represent taxes on Plateau Electric's investments in power lines, buildings, equipment and other facilities needed to distribute electricity to our members. Plateau Electric is the largest taxpayer in Scott County and the second-largest in Morgan County.

## PEC 2015 taxes paid:

Scott County	\$446,567.01
Morgan County	\$219,706.00



Above left, PEC Chief Financial Officer Ryan Keeton, left, gives the co-op's ad valorem payment to Scott County trustee Jimmy Byrd. Above right, PEC District Manager Alfred Branin presents a check to Morgan County trustee Cindi Jones.

# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund

**C**elebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, by making your home more energy-efficient.

Here are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.
3. Call Plateau Electric Cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

**3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**1** Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

**2** DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.

**3** Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

3. Call Plateau Electric Cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## Heat and humidity vs. dry heat

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## Heat reduction is priority No. 1

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who

suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockages. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, visit [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com).

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## Powell Valley Electric Cooperative

Serving all of Hancock County and portions of Claiborne, Grainger, Union and Hawkins counties in Tennessee and portions of Lee, Scott and Wise counties in Virginia.

**Randell W. Meyers,**  
General Manager/CEO  
**Charles "Bo" Goodin,**  
Assistant General Manager  
**JoAnn Dillingham,**  
Director of Accounting  
and Finance  
**Gary Hatfield,**  
Director of Special Projects  
**Ronnie Williams,**  
Tazewell Area Supervisor  
**Jason Stapleton,**  
Jonesville Area Supervisor  
**Joey Southern,**  
Sneedville Area Supervisor

**PVEC office hours**  
Monday through Friday,  
8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Tazewell office:**  
Service requests: 423-626-0707  
Billing inquiries: 423-626-0706  
Outages/trouble: 423-626-5204  
Other inquiries: 423-626-5204

**Jonesville office:**  
Service requests: 276-346-6003  
Billing inquiries: 276-346-6003  
Outages: 276-346-6065  
Other inquiries: 276-346-6016

**Sneedville office:**  
All inquiries: 423-733-2207

Calls to all PVEC locations will be answered by emergency operators after office hours and on weekends and holidays.  
Visit us at [www.pve.coop](http://www.pve.coop).  
You also can contact us via email: [info@pve.coop](mailto:info@pve.coop)

**PVEC Board of Directors**  
**Roger Ball,** President  
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**Allen Parkey**  
**Gary Russell**  
**Mikel Sharp**  
**Michael Shockley**  
**Dr. John Short**

## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

# Thank a lineman on April 11

A lineman's day often doesn't start at 8 a.m., stop at 5 p.m. or even end after eight hours. It is because of the dedication these linemen display on a daily basis that America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day. It is appropriate that we take time to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers.

We often take power — and the men who provide it — for granted. Linemen have to work safely, smart and efficiently. On a typical day, linemen maintain electrical distribution lines or build services to new homes and businesses. They have a lot on their plates. But when our dispatch center calls to crews to report problems, everything else takes a back seat. Restoring power is always top priority. We

have crews standing by to serve you 24 hours a day — even in the middle of the night or wee hours in the morning, weekends and holidays.

Lineman also must focus on safety; the lives of co-workers are on the line. Job safety is important to everyone, no matter your occupation. But for linemen, there can be no slip-ups or careless actions. To be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions, line-

men must be highly trained. At Powell Valley Electric Cooperative, our linemen go through regular training to ensure they can work safely with various kinds of equipment. The equipment gets tested regularly, too.

Our highly skilled linemen help light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives better. We recognize all electric linemen for services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

— Randell W. Meyers



Randell W. Meyers  
General Manager/CEO  
Powell Valley  
Electric Cooperative

# Please help protect our linemen

**W**hether it's in the middle of a severe summer thunderstorm or a relentless winter blizzard, Powell Valley Electric Cooperative's linemen shoulder their responsibilities under what many would consider to be unbearable weather conditions during all hours of the day and night in order to keep your lights burning.

At best, climbing a utility pole to an average height of 30, 35 or 40 feet can, in itself, create a potentially dangerous environment. And, who would think of climbing to such heights in drenching rain accompanied by fierce lightning, in blinding snow with bitter wind chill or in freezing rain that coats everything in its path with an icy glaze? The answer is simple: Co-op linemen accept the challenge to get the job done under all circumstances.

Our linemen face numerous hazards on the job not only during extreme weather conditions but also on a daily basis, and no one would knowingly create a more dangerous situation for them. To help protect PVEC linemen, there are some precautions we all can take to play an important role in doing just that.

"Climbers" worn by our linemen as they maneuver up and down utility poles sink into the wood and are vital in giving them the solid hold they must have in order to safely work on the lines that carry power to homes and businesses throughout the cooperative's service area. If a lineman should lose his hold on the pole, he could fall and be seriously injured or even killed.

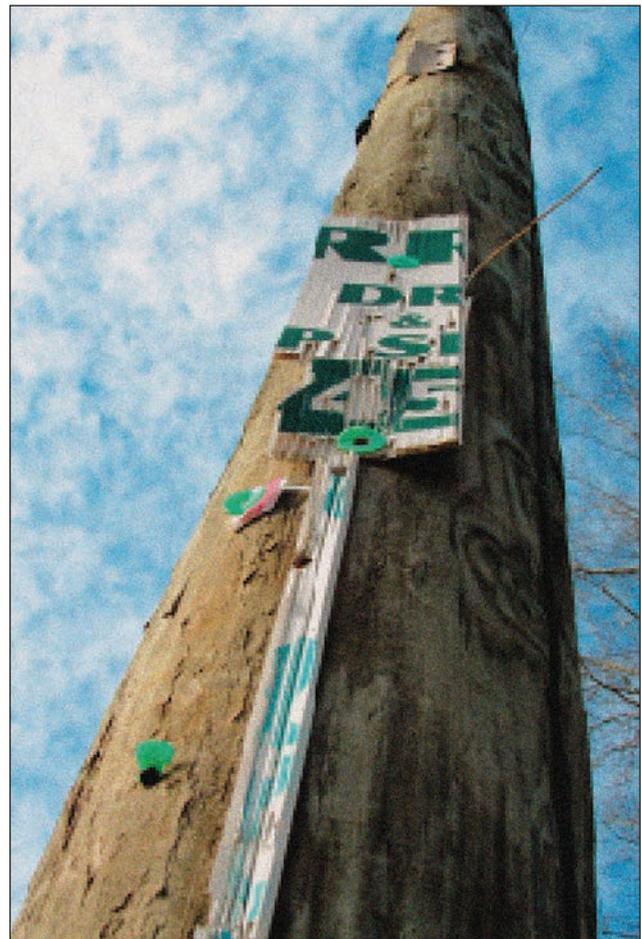
Signs and other attachments on utility poles make climbing the poles extremely hazardous for linemen — and sometimes nearly impossible for them to climb. Placing items on utility poles is not only dangerous to our linemen, it is illegal in many states. Nails, staples and tacks that may be used to fasten signs, posters and recreational equipment to a utility pole are dangerous items that may cause the lineman to be electrocuted if his rubber gloves or sleeves are punctured by them. Even the tiniest puncture in a lineman's rubber gloves can expose him to severe shock from power lines. And, it only takes a nail par-

tially driven into a pole to cause serious injury to a lineman.

Items that create danger for our linemen if attached to utility poles or placed around them may include:

- Basketball goals, birdhouses, etc. The lineman would have to climb around those items, which could cause him to fall.
- Landscaping around the bottom of a utility pole with flower boxes, etc. If a lineman did fall, anything at the base of the pole could cause him more harm.
- Signs or posters on power poles. The signs aren't the problem, but the staples, nails or tacks used to hold them up are.

The next time you or someone you know considers placing an item on a utility pole, please stop and think about our linemen, and put yourself in their shoes. Please do your part to help keep them safe!



# Think before pulling the plug

By John Pulley

**Y**ou may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of units fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters,” makes its case with brochures, fliers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake: The intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

Electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting fixtures. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

Let’s look at the propane marketing campaign. Some of the claims challenge common sense and would be hard to prove, including assertions about efficiency, environmental impacts and cost. “With a propane water heater, you can use less energy, save money and reduce your carbon footprint,” proclaims Danny Lipford, host of the television program “Today’s Homeowner,” in a campaign video. “They really are that efficient.” Apparently Danny neglected to mention that propane is a fossil fuel.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines

and exhaust vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater “can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy-cold showers,” Lipford warns. Actually, in most cases, installing an electric heater is a snap.

Electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are readily available.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric heaters don’t lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house.
- Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.
- The cost of electricity is less volatile than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.

*John Pulley writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

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## Tamper-resistant receptacles are permanent safety solutions

**N**early seven children a day are shocked or burned when they slide keys, pins, paper clips and other small objects into electrical outlets in their homes, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Up to a dozen of them die each year.

That means each room in your house that has an electrical outlet — and that’s probably every single room — presents a danger to your children. It costs about \$2 per outlet to replace your old ones with

updated, tamper-resistant versions designed with a built-in shutter system that prevents objects from entering the slots. Plugs can still fit into the slots, however, when equal pressure is applied to both sides.

Tamper-resistant receptacles are safer than removable outlet caps because children are unable to detach them.

The National Electrical Code requires new homes to come with tamper-resistant receptacles, but it’s up to the owners of older homes to upgrade their outlets.

# Take a break from technology

By Meghaan Evans

**M**any people complain that it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days. As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do. In fact, device dependence has become so severe, even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later, you can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to “soak-up” and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Device dependence isn't only detrimental to our cognitive development; it can also strain our relationships. Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this daydreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).
- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.
- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all your

push notifications so they don't distract you from the task at hand.

- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: Start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking his or her phone or playing a video game. Make the prize a fun treat to incentivize them to win!
- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.
- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens.

We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

*Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# Circulate the cool

**A** surefire way to save energy in the coming summer months is to kick that thermostat up a few notches. If just the thought of doing that makes you start sweating, you can keep your cool at that higher temperature by turning on a ceiling fan.



The fan circulates the air, and you can feel the movement on your skin. Your room won't be any cooler, but you will feel cooler in that room.

Ceiling fans aren't the bland fixtures they once were. Blades now come in painted, metallic or wood finishes to match your décor. Some manufacturers make two-sided blades you can flip over whenever you want a new look.

Many also combine the fan with lighting. You can choose from traditional "downlighting" or more modern "uplighting," which bounces the light off the ceiling to diffuse it and make it softer. Follow these

tips for choosing the best ceiling fans for the room:

- The bigger the room, the longer the blades should be. A rule of thumb: For a room smaller than 100 square feet like a bathroom, buy a fan with 32- to 36-inch blades. For a medium-sized bedroom or kitchen — up to about 225 square feet — you'll need blades measuring 42 to 48 inches. Large master bedrooms and dining rooms up to 485 square feet require 50- to 56-inch blades. Rooms larger than 600 square feet will need blades measuring 60 inches or more.
- Install a fan 7 to 8 feet from the floor.
- If your room has high ceilings, buy an extension "down-rod" to lower the fan. For short ceilings, some manufacturers offer "close-mount" fans.
- Don't mess with hard-to-reach cords. Connect your fan and/or light to a wall light switch or remote control.

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## Plant a tree on Earth Day

**E**arth Day is on Friday, April 22, this year, and it's the perfect day to plant a tree. Earth Day organizers encourage everyone to plant trees wherever they can: in parks, in their neighborhoods or in their own yards.

If you plant a tree in your yard, choose a strategic location that will allow the tree to shade your home from the hot summer sun. As it grows, the tree will help reduce your air-conditioning bills and keep your home more comfortable.

Some tips from the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees on the west and northwest sides of your home will shade the building during mid- to late afternoons.
- Keep branches pruned enough that they don't block your view when you look out of west-facing windows.
- Shade trees along driveways and patios will keep you cooler while you're outside. The shade keeps the concrete and your yard cooler.
- Protect your outdoor air-conditioning unit from weather-related wear and tear by planting a shade tree nearby. The less direct sunlight that hits the unit, the more efficiently it will run all summer.

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## *Heat and humidity vs. dry heat*

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## *Heat reduction is priority No. 1*

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air-conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## *Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates*

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum

efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## *DIY humidity reduction*

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockages. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, visit [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com).

*Anne Prince writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



**TIP:** Earth Day is Friday, April 22! Give back to the environment by planting a tree to help shade your house on hot summer days. Ask Mom and Dad to help you pick the perfect spot, and plant the tree!



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# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



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## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

### Critical connections behind the power

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it is appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgement. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — there is a lot more work taking place behind the scenes.

#### The critical supporters behind your power

The lineman out in the field works with thousands of volts of electricity high atop power lines 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to keep electricity flowing and maintaining the energy infrastructure. My role as president of the co-op is to ensure that all employees know what their roles are and how to perform them at a high level. STEMC must recruit and retain top talent in this highly competitive environment. Our business is about much more than power; it's about exceptional service and commitment to community. For 80 years, Southwest Tennessee EMC has worked hard to provide quality products and services at an affordable price.

#### Promoting a culture of safety

The Operations and Engineering departments ensure that the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. Safety is an equally important area of focus. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count on the Operations and Engineering Department to ensure they have access to everything from lighting, heating, cooling and so much more.



Kevin Murphy  
President,  
Southwest Tennessee Electric  
Membership Corporation

#### Calling for energy efficiency

Member service representatives answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on the monthly bill. The Member Services Department is responsible for ensuring that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the time you sign up for membership.

#### Delivering timely savings

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of Southwest Tennessee EMC. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill we send to you either electronically or through regular mail. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs, and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are still a business. As such, the Accounting Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the money we pay for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employee salaries and other expenditures.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. These folks handle the recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits, and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to our members. For example, Southwest Tennessee EMC sponsors youth scholarships and an educational trip to

Washington, D.C. as part of the co-op's Youth Tour program each summer.

### Staying in sync

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community sets us apart. From sponsoring local school activities to supporting new jobs through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities, and it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, more than 900 electric co-ops, including Southwest Tennessee EMC, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

## STEMC pays ad valorem taxes

More than 20 city and county tax districts in southwest Tennessee will receive a total of \$1,678,847.76 from Southwest Tennessee Electric in tax-equivalent payments for 2016.

The tax-equivalent payments, or ad valorem taxes, are based on Southwest Tennessee Electric's power sales revenue and cooperative-owned property in each district.

Southwest Tennessee Electric has been paying taxes since 1937, when the total amount of ad valorem taxes paid was \$2,227.35.

"Southwest Tennessee Electric is locally owned and does business in the communities we serve," says STEMC President Kevin Murphy. "Our tax payments benefit local communities that use the funds for schools, roads and other services."



STEMC's Scott Sims, right, presents an ad valorem tax check to Haywood County trustee Sonny Howse.

Taxing District	Actual Tax Paid Feb. 28, 2016
Chester County	237,218.00
Crockett County	536.00
Fayette County	33,074.00
Hardeman County	33,405.00
Haywood County	180,936.12
Henderson County	33,245.00
Lauderdale County	35,459.00
McNairy County	406.00
Madison County	294,977.00
Shelby County	608.22
Tipton County	615,889.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>1,465,753.34</b>
Atoka	33,228.00
Brighton	11,542.00
Brownsville	52,950.00
Covington	17,559.00
Gallaway	10,313.00
Henderson	45,503.00
Henning	77.00
Jackson	1,338.00
Mason	4318.42
Munford	26,582.00
Stanton	2,478.00
Whiteville	7,206.00
<b>Subtotal:</b>	<b>213,094.42</b>
<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>1,678,847.76</b>

# An ounce of prevention ...

Story by Billy Gordon, STEMC Vice President of Engineering

For nearly 80 years, Southwest Tennessee Electric has been providing electric service to the rural communities of West Tennessee. When you think about it, in that span of time, nearly everything around us has changed in some way or another. Towns have evolved from what were once just forks in the road. TVs have transitioned from a piece of living room furniture to a device you can carry in your pocket. Clothes are no longer hung on the line to dry.

But one thing has essentially remained the same: *how* STEMC has served the rural communities all these years. The wires connected to your house are still standard aluminum wire. The transformers are still made of the same basic materials. Poles are still made of wood. And the whole network is still being supplied by an electric substation.

That same model has been in place for over 100 years. Because of that longevity, STEMC spends a considerable amount of time each year maintaining all that infrastructure. You may see crews in your area from time to time replacing poles and transformers, but one notable part that requires tedious maintenance are the electric substations. These substations are the beginning of our electrical network that eventually makes its way into your home, powering the devices that help make your lives convenient and comfortable.



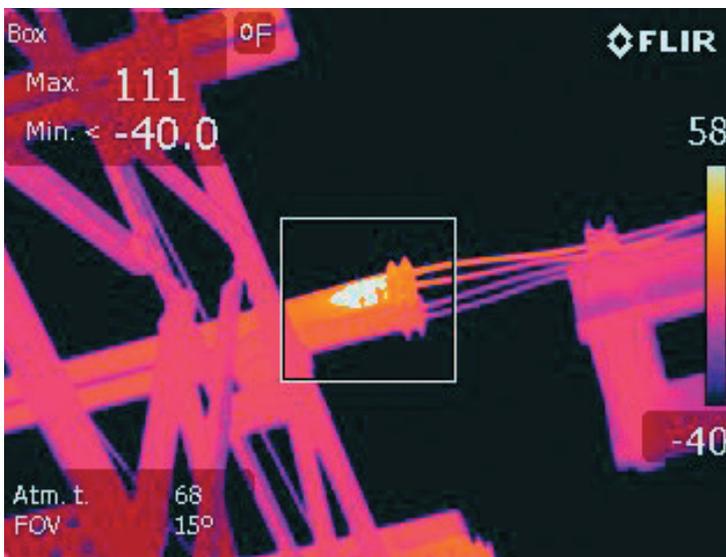
Kevin Holt and Mark Ferrell remove the last substation oil circuit breaker at STEMC.

In order to extend the life of this important part of the power system, STEMC has a rigorous inspection routine for electric substations. Monthly walkthroughs and inspection checklists are completed. Diagnostic testing is performed on power transformers. Electric circuit breakers are tested to ensure their accurate and timely operation. Protective relays are tested to make sure they respond properly during a lightning storm or fallen tree. Thermal imaging is used to seek out loose connections that could potentially cause outages if left uncorrected.

But with all that preventive maintenance, things still unfortunately break sometimes. And even worse, when something breaks at the electrical substation, it's more than just you and your neighbor who loses power; it affects more than just your street. Electrical substation outages affect many members over large areas. That's why STEMC is continually inspecting and assessing the viability of each substation.

Each year, STEMC commits a significant amount of funding to make improvements in these substations and to even build new ones if needed. Major work is identified several years in advance so components can be repaired or replaced before an outage occurs.

Since the electric system essentially hasn't changed in the last 80 years, we don't expect it to change anytime soon. As member-owners, feel confident that STEMC is working hard to ensure those investments are in tip-top shape for long and useful service lives.



Thermal imaging identifies a loose connection that was corrected before it caused an outage.

# Turning a lemon into lemonade: 'Our Folly'

Story by Marilyn Means, STEMC Marketing and Energy Services Coordinator

Serving your property with reliable electricity is a priority with Southwest Tennessee Electric. Tree-trimming is necessary in our service area so we can maintain our lines to keep your lights on. All STEMC members are impacted by this process at one time or another.

Concerned with the declining health of a large oak tree on their property, one family decided to make this necessary but sometimes unpleasant process into a more desirable situation, creating an attractive structure from the tree's bare trunk.

Bob and Donna Frankland have lived for many years on the corner of Bells Highway and Old Bells Road in Madison County, a site that has actually been Bob's homeplace since the late 1940s. The Franklands contacted STEMC forester Keith Riddell about the tree.

"Keith was very kind and understanding about the situation, and we knew it was the best thing for our electrical service as well as for our neighbors for the tree to be removed," said Donna.

An architectural designer with Bryant Glasgow Architecture in Nashville, Donna had designed an

ornamental building for a client and immediately thought of it when a decision needed to be made about the trunk of the oak tree.

"I thought that instead of having a bare tree trunk standing or even having it ground up, I wanted to create my own folly," she said.

Located on the roadside, the trunk-turned-cottage offers a pleasant sight for people passing the property. And the creative design helped the Franklands cope with the loss of their oak tree. Passers-by daily stop to view and take pictures of the cottage's whimsical and charming appearance.

Donna says she is very happy with the work of the contractor, Larry Cupples, in building the cottage piece exactly as she designed it.

"I am pleased that I chose to do this project — especially because it is making other people happy to see it as they drive by," said Donna.

The Franklands say they are very pleased with the tree trimming by

R&R Tree Service, owned by Chris Rich.

"The crew was very professional and prompt and did a superb job and nice cleanup," said Bob. "I could not have been more pleased with the finished project."



Bob and Donna Frankland with "Our Folly."

# Sharing the lineman story

Story by Marilyn Means, STEMC Marketing and Energy Services Coordinator

Southwest Tennessee Electric is very proud of our linemen and the hard work they do. To highlight our unsung heroes, STEMC was invited to the Tipton County Library to read to the children.

STEMC's Marilyn Means read "Lineman: The Unsung Heroes," by Michelle Larson as Chris Fisher, STEMC lineman, shared with the children stories about his job.

STEMC was honored to be a part of the Community Heroes event sponsored by the library.

STEMC lineman Chris Fisher enjoys picture time with children at the Tipton County Library.



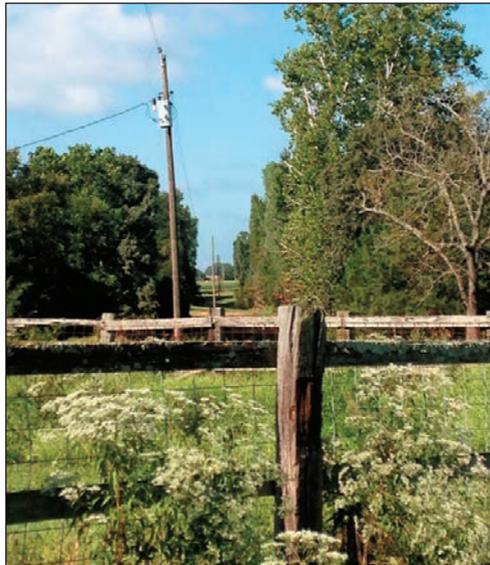
# Trees and power lines

**T**rees are important for many reasons. They offer protection from the summer sun and the winter wind. They provide habitat for many species of animals and give children a place to play. However, trees and utility lines do not mix.

Vegetation management is an important aspect of Southwest Tennessee Electric's goal of providing our members with safe, reliable and affordable energy. STEMC maintains a comprehensive vegetation management program for three reasons:

- Safety
- System reliability
- Economic responsibility

Southwest Tennessee Electric's vegetation management program controls plant growth in proximity of STEMC lines and equipment. Our tree trimmers are in your area once every three to five years to maintain clearance. National Electric Safety Code and Occupational Safety



and Health Administration regulations require electric utilities to clear vegetation from power lines as a safety measure for our members and our employees.

Right-of-way maintenance crews are supervised by foresters who follow the guidelines of experts from the International Society of Arboriculture and the National Arbor Day Foundation. Their work may include pruning or removing trees or brush.

STEMC employs a forester in each district. These foresters plan the implication of the vegetation management for each district.

For more information on the vegetation management program, visit [www.stemc.com](http://www.stemc.com) or call your local office.



## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is Friday, April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# Community News

## A new way to pay in Covington

Southwest Tennessee Electric has a new self-service kiosk at the Covington office at 1800 Highway 51 South. The kiosk accepts payments 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and no minimum payment amount is required. Members must have their STEMC account numbers in order to make payments at the kiosk, which

accepts cash, credit or debit cards and personal checks. Payments made at the kiosk immediately credit your STEMC bill, and a receipt is printed out for every payment. The kiosk does not give change, so the full amount of cash you insert will be credited to your electric account.

## Energy Right Solutions



Amanda Doyle of the Dollar General Store in Whiteville accepts a check from STEMC's Jodi Springer for participation in the Energy Right Incentive Program.

## STEMC community meeting



STEMC members are treated to door prizes, snacks and a lineman presentation by Thomas Carlton and Phillip Mullins at the Haywood County Fire Department District 9.

# Love of Learning Youth Program

Story by Jodi Springer

The EnergyRight Solutions for Youth program at Southwest Tennessee Electric is a great way to encourage kids to learn about electricity and a great resource for educators who need reliable material to teach their students.

Throughout the Love of Learning Month, representatives from STEMC and the Tennessee Valley Authority went to area schools to promote electrical education programs to teachers and administrators so they could become more familiar with what their co-op has to offer. These programs implementing current state standards in individual lesson plans were designed by educators and TVA, STEMC and the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association. The programs are important for our educational system as they give educators access to free materials and allow them to give more of their

time to their students. Administrators at each visited school in the STEMC service area were very grateful for the information and say they plan to utilize the lesson plans in future classroom settings. These programs aren't just for schools; they can be implemented with other educational organizations as well.

Another way STEMC helps educate youth is through educational safety programs. In February, Southwest employees read books at area libraries, schools and daycare centers, informing the children about electricity and how to stay safe around it. Louie the Lightning Bug even made special appearances alongside real linemen.

If you know of educator or organizations that could benefit from these resources, please have them contact Jodi Springer at 731-772-1322.



Louie the Lightning bug visits Brittany Ferrell's second-grade class at Haywood Elementary School.

# Another BLAST from the PAST

This page was taken from Southwest Tennessee EMC's 1962 Annual Report.

Right, employees located in our Brownsville headquarters building. Front row, left to right, E. M. Wright, Manager; Jack P. Johns, Marshall Mulherin, Livingston, Ernestine Pendergrast, Frances McClanahan, Bernice Hays, Prichard, Hubert Williams; back row, left to right, Cullen Hagerly, Rooks Cobbs, Joe Nuckolls, Marguerite Bridgewater, Aubrey Ammons, Marvin Smith, Robert Haywood, and Elizabeth Kendall, not shown.



**your cooperative's  
EMPLOYEES**

With a team of 95 trained, loyal employees, your Cooperative is able to provide you with quality service for these changing times. The men and women who make up this team are capable and experienced in their various fields of work. And they are constantly improving their working methods to render you ever better service.

To reduce operating costs and to improve the quality of your service, your Cooperative also uses the most modern equipment available. Last year, among other things, we added trucking equipment with hydraulic lifts and pole diggers.

Competent employees, using modern electric equipment, make up your Cooperative—the organization that has helped to change a whole way of life in this area.

Throughout the year, you will find your Cooperative's servicemen making repairs and adding new equipment along our service lines. They are taught to work the lines while they are still energized—a dangerous job taking great skill.



Ray Reed is supervisor of the Henderson service crew pictured at right. Front row, left to right, Ray Reed, Natalie Moffitt, Worley McCall, Gilbert Pierce, Collis Morris, E. J. Little, Manson Roby; back row, left to right, Cratus Webster, Leonard Hamby, Lynn Priddy, Ortha Hysmith, Thomas H. Greene, J. B. Whitwell, William H. Jones, Hastie Cox, William Taylor. Not shown, Henry Robinson and W. V. Harris.



## Plant a tree on Earth Day

**E**arth Day is on Friday, April 22, this year, and it's the perfect day to plant a tree. Earth Day organizers encourage everyone to plant trees wherever they can: in parks, in their neighborhoods or in their own yards.

If you plant a tree in your yard, choose a strategic location that will allow the tree to shade your home from the hot summer sun. As it grows, the tree will help reduce your air-conditioning bills and keep your home more comfortable.

Some tips from the Arbor Day Foundation:

- Trees on the west and northwest sides of your home will shade the building during mid- to late afternoons.
- Keep branches pruned enough that they don't block your view when you look out of west-facing windows.
- Shade trees along driveways and patios will keep you cooler while you're outside. The shade keeps the concrete and your yard cooler.
- Protect your outdoor air-conditioning unit from weather-related wear and tear by planting a shade tree nearby. The less direct sunlight that hits the unit, the more efficiently it will run all summer.

April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

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## Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative

Serving all or portions of Bledsoe, Grundy, Marion, Sequatchie, Coffee, Hamilton, Rhea and Van Buren counties.

### Service Centers:

512 S. Cedar Ave.; P.O. Box 31,  
South Pittsburg, TN 37380  
Telephone — 423-837-8605  
Toll-free — 800-923-2203

97 Resource Road; P.O. Box 518,  
Dunlap, TN 37327  
Telephone — 423-949-2198

3396 Main St.; P.O. Box 441,  
Pikeville, TN 37367  
Telephone — 423-447-2131

14002 Highway 41; P.O. Box 100,  
Tracy City, TN 37387  
Telephone — 931-592-2511

14087 Highway 28,  
Whitwell, TN 37397  
Monday/Wednesday/Friday  
Telephone — 423-658-7832

SV Propane  
1-877-521-3055 (toll-free)  
931-592-5126

After hours: 888-421-7832  
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## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

# Thank a lineman on April 11

America's electric cooperatives have designated the second Monday of April as National Lineman Appreciation Day.

On April 11, 2016, Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative will honor the dedicated men who often work in challenging conditions to keep the lights on. We proudly recognize all electric linemen for the services they perform around the clock in dangerous conditions to keep power flowing and protect the public's safety.

Our lineworkers are the first responders of our electric distribution system, at times working around the clock on high-voltage lines. Conditions can be dangerous, but they power through to ensure reliable service for our members.

Thirty men maintain nearly 3,500 miles of line in SVEC's service territory, but they don't work alone on our power lines. Whether they are climbing 40-foot poles, restoring power or clearing tree limbs to prevent future outages, they are never far from the hearts of the women and children who love them. See the story “Love on the line — The life of a lineman's family” on pages 24 and 25.

If the lights go out, our linemen's families send their loved ones out into the elements. When other electric cooperatives are in trouble after devastating hurricanes, tornadoes, fires and floods, our linemen have traveled as far as Vir-

ginia and Louisiana to bring the lights back on for complete strangers. Each time these brave men leave home to help those in need, their families are left behind, praying for a safe return.

Working with high-voltage electricity, lineworkers find themselves in life-and-death situations on a regular basis. That's why SVEC focuses on safety first. Our monthly safety training meetings and daily “tailgate talks” help to keep good safety habits fresh in the mind of every lineman. We know the folks who love our 30 linemen appreciate the time we take to make sure our employees get

home safe every night.

Marrying into this profession isn't easy. But the bold men who keep your power flowing do so because they know that without their commitment, many things we've come to expect — hot meals, light, entertainment — wouldn't be possible. By devoting their lives to working on utility lines, they connect all of us to a better way of life.

This month on Lineman Appreciation Day, April 11, take a moment to thank not only the men who help “power our everyday lives” but also the women and children who support and love the men who brave the elements and work long hours to keep power flowing to our homes each and every day. Thank you for putting your love on the line — we're committed to making sure the men you love return home safe.

Use #thankalinenman to show your support for the men and women who light our lives. It is the dedication of our SVEC employees and their families that makes us “Co-op Strong.”



Mike Partin  
SVEC CEO

CO-OP  
**T**  
STRONG

# SVEC Spotlight on Safety

## Electrical safety during and after storms

Severe storms and natural disasters can cause a variety of safety hazards in and around our homes. Lightning, downed power lines and floods are just a few of the serious safety concerns associated with storms. Unfortunately, many of these electrical safety hazards remain long after the storm itself has passed.

One hazard of particular danger is a downed power line. Unusual circumstances such as a storm can cause power lines to fall to the ground without signaling the protective devices to de-energize the circuit.

Another serious hazard is the misuse of member-owned standby generators engaged when the electricity is expected to be out for an extended amount of time.

The transformers used to reduce the voltage coming into your home are capable of working in reverse when “back-fed” by voltage from a standby generator. Backfeeding can cause our lines to become energized with dangerously high voltage.

The only truly safe way to use a generator is to have a qualified electrician install a transfer switch rated for the application. This not only protects our employees from possible electrocution, it also protects you and your generator when our linemen install grounding equipment to ensure their safety.

**Be Prepared Before the Storm**

Here are some basic items you should store in your home in case of emergency:

- Water: Three day supply, one gallon per person per day
- Food: Three day supply, non-perishable, high-energy
- Clothing, bedding, and sanitation supplies
- Tools: Can opener, plates, utensils, flashlight, batteries, cash, bleach, hand sanitizer
- First aid supplies, medicine
- Important documents

Visit [redcross.org/domore](http://redcross.org/domore) to learn more about disaster kits.

Source: American Red Cross, Federal Emergency Management Agency

The employees of Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative are here to serve our members. Educating you as a member helps us get the lights back on more quickly and safely.

To help protect you from storm-related electrical hazards, please review the following:

- If you see a downed power line, move at least 10 feet away from it and anything touching it.
- Shuffle away from the line with small steps, keeping your feet together and on the ground at all times to minimize the potential for a strong electric shock.

- If you see someone in direct contact with a downed line, do not touch the person. You could become the next victim. Call 911 instead.
- If you have a portable generator, operate it outdoors in an area with plenty of ventilation. Never run a generator in a home or garage. Generators give off deadly carbon monoxide.
- Do not plug a generator into the wall.

— Donnie Cooper, SVEC  
Safety and Maintenance  
Coordinator

# Cooperative Response Center

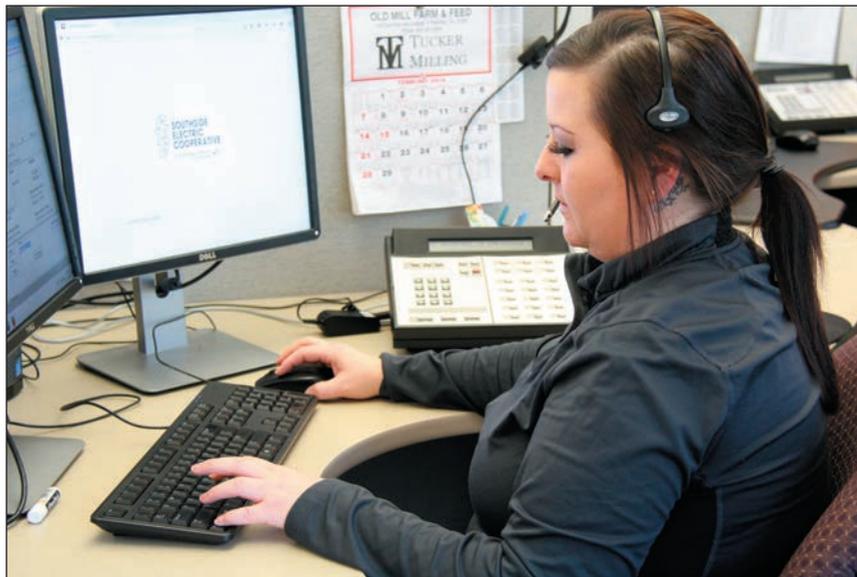
## 24/7 service for more than 6 million utility customers

**I**t is a stormy night. The wind is howling, lightning is popping all around and ... the lights go out. The electric co-op is closed. Who will answer your outage call? You are lucky. Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative is a member-utility of the Cooperative Response Center (CRC) so your call will be handled courteously and efficiently regardless of the day of the week or the time of day.

SVEC and over 325 other electric cooperatives and other utilities rely on CRC to provide after-hours call handling and dispatch services to provide members with the excellent service they expect from their cooperative.

Before SVEC joined CRC, after-hours calls were handled by a single lineman “on-call” in each of the four counties in our service area — not the most efficient way to handle after-hours business. Many small electric utilities at the time were in the same situation. They simply did not have the budget for an after-hours call service. So, just as the need for electricity in rural America was met by cooperatives in the 1930s and 1940s, electric co-op leaders banded together and formed a cooperative to provide a needed service for their members.

CRC was formed in 1992 in Austin, Minnesota, by 19 Upper Midwest electric cooperatives that needed central-station alarm monitoring. By pooling resources and sharing fixed



*CRC is staffed with friendly, knowledgeable customer service representatives 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They are trained to handle outage calls, take payments over the phone and answer questions our cooperative members may have. While the Dunlap staff primarily serves utilities across the Southeast, in times of widespread outages, representatives may assist cooperatives throughout the country.*

costs, the utilities obtained the service at a much more affordable cost than any one utility alone could have procured. The cooperative effort worked so well that CRC was soon providing call-handling and crew-dispatch contact center services. As word spread, its membership and list of services quickly expanded.

By late 1998, when Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative became one of the South’s first utilities to

join CRC; it was serving more than 1 million consumers from more than 100 electric utilities. As growing numbers of Southern utilities began to take advantage of CRC’s services, the need for a customer contact center in closer proximity to these new members became apparent. When the time came to select the site for the new center, SVEC’s leadership was instrumental in CRC’s decision to locate the regional customer contact center in the Sequatchie Valley. The center opened in 2001, housing 20 local employees in leased offices in SVEC’s Dunlap building.

*CRC has already outgrown its building constructed in the Sequachee Valley Industrial Park in Dunlap in 2007 and is currently remodeling and reconfiguring it to expand the contact center.*





*CRC's customer contact centers "live by the Weather Channel." The weather forecasts for the U.S. are constantly monitored and weighed heavily in staffing decisions for the company whose volume of calls is determined chiefly by the weather in the areas it serves. The Cooperative Response Center's Dunlap call center serves electric cooperative members across five time zones, although most nonstorm calls come from the Southeast.*

As its consumer base continued to expand, CRC outgrew the leased Dunlap offices and constructed a new building in the Sequachee Valley Industrial Park in 2007. In 2011, a center in Abilene, Texas, was added.

Today, the Dunlap center is again feeling growing pains. CRC will be adding more than 20 new employees this month. To make room for the new staff members, CRC is redesigning its current building and has moved support offices back to the SVEC office space.

Cooperative-wide, CRC now employs more than 300 and serves more than 325 member and associate member co-ops in 41 states — one in three cooperatives in the United States — with an excess of 6 million member-consumers.

CRC's growth has been good for our local economy. Most of the well over 100 employees in the Dunlap contact center are from Sequatchie County and the surrounding counties. Good jobs close to home not only boost the economy but are a blessing to employees such as Tina Plain, who worked in Chattanooga for more than 20 years before coming to work at CRC.

"I have always loved helping people, and now I'm only six minutes from work," Plain said. "When I was driving to Chattanooga I had two hours of my life just gone every day."

Growth and expansion of services have also been good for SVEC's members. CRC can now take SVEC payments over the phone after our offices are closed, giving our members even more ways to do business with SVEC on their schedules.

"We are very fortunate to be located in Dunlap," said Michelle LaVelle, CRC's service excellence director. "The geographic location is central to so many of the other electric cooperatives in the Southeast. It really helped us grow.

"I love being here. The area is beautiful, and the people are wonderful. We are happy to be able to provide jobs in a time when there are so many looking for work.

"Also, we get great support from our partner, SVEC. That is what I love about the cooperative world: Our members are not just our customers; they are our partners."

As a cooperative business, CRC follows the seven Cooperative Principles, which includes "Concern for Community." CRC demonstrates this principle year-round with its community involvement and corporate giving programs.

At the corporate level, CRC offers \$6,000 in scholarships to local students in the communities where its offices are located, matches funds raised

by its employees for local charities, contributes to the NRECA International Foundation and provides sponsorship and participation in local chambers of commerce.

Also at the local level, the employees in each of the three CRC offices identify the needs in their communities then plan and carry out fundraising events to benefit their chosen charities. CRC also allows employees to take paid time off each year to volunteer for the charitable organizations of their choice.

This past year, Dunlap employees helped sponsor the Sequatchie County Public Library Summer Reading Program, hosted a free Trunk or Treat event at Halloween, supported the Dunlap Christmas for Kids event and worked all year raising nearly \$2,000 to help six families with a total of 11 children this past Christmas through the Adopt-a-Family program.

CRC and other business partners that share our core beliefs and goals are what make SVEC Co-op Strong.

*Employees at each of CRC's three call centers contribute time and money to important local causes. At right, CRC Dunlap's Heather Pleasanton assists with the Sequatchie County Library's summer reading program.*



# Love on the line — The life

**O**n Monday, April 11, we celebrate Lineman Appreciation Day. A lineman's job is a dangerous one that requires sacrifice, often at the expense of family. This Lineman Appreciation Day, we not only thank the line workers who brave the elements to keep our power flowing and our lives comfortable, but we also thank their spouses

and families who watch them walk out the door, often in severe weather, not knowing when they will return. In their own words, the wives of four of our linemen/line foremen share with us what life is like as the wife of a Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative lineman.

**“L**ittle did I know nearly 40 years ago when I married Blane what it would mean to be the wife of a lineman. It takes a lot of courage, sacrifice and understanding. When the weather is bad, I know he will be working, and I have never wanted him to worry about us — just keep his mind on his work, be safe and get the power on fast!

“We are a team. At times, I have had to step up and take care of problems at home so that he could continue to work getting power back on for those without. I have taken phone calls from people reporting outages, cooked meals for the crew and even washed and dried clothes for them after they had been soaked working in the rain.

“Blane takes a lot of pride in what he does. I've always said that linework is in his blood.

“They (the linemen) are one big family. When he comes home from work each day, I thank God for watching over him and keeping him safe.”

— *Shereen Stewart, wife of Marion County Line Foreman Blane Stewart*



*Shereen, Aspen and Blane Stewart,  
Mother's Day 1986*

“When the weather is bad, I know he will be working, and I have never wanted him to worry about us — just keep his mind on his work, be safe and get the power on fast!”

— *Shereen Stewart, wife of Marion County Line Foreman Blane Stewart*

# of a lineman's family

**“F**or a lineman's family, it's missed Christmas mornings, birthdays and ball games. As much as we would love for them to not miss out on family time, we know working power outages comes with the territory. It's just part of our lives. We are proud of the work they do and their commitment to the community where our families, friends and neighbors live and work.”

— *Lynna Griffith, wife of Sequatchie County Line Foreman Michael Griffith*



Michael and Lynna Griffith with son Evan and daughter Chloe.



Joey and Donna Roberts, center, with sons Jordan and Dustin; their wives, Kayla and Amanda; daughter Madilyn and granddaughters Ainsley and Bristol.

**“Y**ou pray for him and the others as they walk out that door. As they work tirelessly to make sure everyone has power restored. You pray they will be safe and will return to you when the work — in every type of weather — is finished. Tim has been with the SVEC team for 36 years, putting the people in our community before himself. This is why I am proud to be a lineman's wife!”

— *Debbie Shrum, wife of Grundy County Lineman Tim Shrum*

**“W**hen he gets a call, you never know if he will be gone a couple of hours, all night or even days. I am very thankful for God's protection over my husband and all the linemen. Their jobs are very dangerous, especially when working long hours with little to no rest.”

— *Donna Roberts, wife of Bledsoe County Line Foreman Joey Roberts*



Debbie and Tim Shrum, center, with daughters Tabitha and Danielle and Danielle's husband, Tommy Hensley, and son Taylor.

## Co-op Strong Trivia Contest

One Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative member who correctly answers the trivia question below will be awarded a Midland weather radio and an emergency preparedness kit. The answer will be found by reading the SVEC local news section.

Send the answer by postcard or email (no phone calls, please). Mail entries to SVEC — Co-op Strong Trivia; P.O. Box 31, South Pittsburg, TN 37380 or email entries to [memberservices@svalleyec.com](mailto:memberservices@svalleyec.com). Entries must be postmarked or received via email by Saturday, April 30. One winner selected from a random drawing of the correct entries will be named in SVEC section of the June issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

Thank you to all those who entered the February contest. The correct answer to the question, “In what year was the Rye Mabee House placed on the National Register of Historic Places?” is “1997.” Congratulations to Carolyn Richardson of Monteagle whose correct answer was drawn, winning her a \$75 gift certificate to High Point Restaurant in Monteagle.



Correctly answer the trivia question, below and you could win this Midland Weather Radio and emergency preparedness kit.

**April Co-op Strong trivia question:**  
In what year did the Dunlap CRC call center open?

## SVEC pays taxes too

Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative recently made payments of \$1,098,702.63 in ad valorem taxes to city and county governments in eight counties in its service area. These payments represent taxes for lines, buildings, equipment and all other facilities necessary to provide electric service to SVEC’s residential and commercial member-owners.

2015 ad valorem taxes total more than \$1 million			
City/County	2015	City/County	2015
Bledsoe County	\$153,927.00	Marion County	\$394,977.00
Pikeville	\$17,051.00	Jasper	\$8,877.71
Coffee County	\$730.00	Kimball	\$1,661.00
Grundy County	\$218,376.00	New Hope	\$1,247.00
Tracy City	\$7,643.00	S. Pittsburg	\$38,145.00
Hamilton County	\$2,599.37	Whitwell	\$6,047.55
Sequatchie County	\$204,735.00	Rhea County	\$273.00
Dunlap	\$28,748.00	Van Buren County	\$13,665.00
Grand total taxes paid for 2015 — \$1,098,702.63			

## Love family movie night?

Then protect your entertainment system with Surge Protection from SVEC.



**Free installation through June 30 — a \$30 value**

Visit [www.svalleyec.com](http://www.svalleyec.com) or call your local SVEC office for information.



# SAVE

On Our Most Popular TV Packages

# BIG

**SAVE A BUNDLE**

DISH TV Service + High-Speed Internet

For One Low Price  
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All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutopay



Must mention offer code at time of order: **GIFTS0**  
Courtesy of InfinityDISH, certain conditions apply.

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WE ARE OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK: 8 AM - MIDNIGHT EST, SUNDAY 9 AM - MIDNIGHT EST. • OFFER ONLY GOOD FOR NEW DISH SUBSCRIBERS. • SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

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**FREE**

**HOPPER**  
Smart DVR  
Equipment Upgrade

Available with qualifying packages. Monthly fees apply: Hopper, \$15; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10.

**FREE**

Premium Movie Channels

**HBO** **CINEMAX**  
**SHOWTIME** **starz**

For 3 Months

Offer subject to change based on premium channel availability. Not available with certain packages. Regular monthly prices apply after 3 months unless you call to cancel.

**FREE**

**HD**  
For Life

Available with qualifying packages.

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutopay

Ask about adding **High-Speed Internet** with prices starting at:

Starting at  
**\$14.95**

Restrictions Apply.  
Subject to Availability

All calls with InfinityDISH are monitored and recorded for quality assurance and training purposes. **Important Terms and Conditions: Promotional Offers:** Advertised price requires credit qualification and eAutopay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. After 12-month promotional period, then-current monthly price applies and is subject to change. **Offer ends 6/6/16 2 Year Commitment:** Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. **Hopper:** Monthly fees: Hopper, \$15; Joey, \$7; Super Joey, \$10. **Premium Channels:** Subject to credit qualification. After 3 mos., you will be billed \$50/mo. for HBO, Cinemax, Showtime and Starz unless you call to cancel. **Installation/Equipment Requirements:** Free Standard Professional Installation only. Leased equipment must be returned to DISH upon cancellation or unreturned equipment fees apply. **Other:** All prices, fees, charges, packages, programming, features, functionality and offers subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., you will be billed \$8/mo for Protection Plan unless you call to cancel. Free standard professional installation only. Taxes or reimbursement charges for state gross earnings taxes may apply. Additional restrictions and taxes may apply. HBO®, Cinemax® and related channels and service marks are the property of Home Box Office, Inc. SHOWTIME is a registered trademark of Showtime Networks Inc., a CBS Company. STARZ and related channels and service marks are property of Starz Entertainment, LLC. Visa® gift card must be requested through your DISH Representative at time of purchase. \$50 Visa® gift card requires activation and \$2.95 shipping and handling fee. You will receive a claim voucher within 3-4 weeks and the voucher must be returned within 30 days. Your Visa® gift card will arrive in approximately 6-8 weeks. InfinityDISH charges a one-time \$49.99 non-refundable processing fee which is subject to change at any time without notice. Indiana CPD. Reg. No. T.S. R1903.



# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



**Management**

*Paul Thompson, Executive Vice-President & General Manager*

**Jimmy Beecham, Director of Engineering**

**Russell Cherry, Manager of Purchasing**

**Tammy Dixon, Manager of Marketing/Key Accts.**

**Annette Eaton, Consumer Accts. Supervisor**

**Glenn Hale, Dir. of Finance & Administration**

**Laura Kirby, Human Resource Coordinator**

**Ralph Law, Director of Operations**

**Steve Linville, Field Engineer Supervisor**

**Jason Short, Network & Telecom Administrator**

**Tri-County Electric Office Hours**

Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Website-www.tcemc.org

**Lafayette Office, Headquarters**

**Jerry Wilmore, Operations Superintendent**

405 College St.

P.O. Box 40, Lafayette, TN 37083

615-666-2111

**Burkesville Office**

**Sammy Farlee, Operations Superintendent**

383 N. Main

P.O. Box 95, Burkesville, KY 42717

270-864-3871

**Celina Office**

**James Gray, Operations Superintendent**

105 E. Lake Ave.

P.O. Box 369

Celina, TN 38551

931-243-3133

**Edmonton Office**

**Mike Davis, Operations Superintendent**

205 East St.

P.O. Box 86, Edmonton, KY 42129

270-432-4242

**Hartsville Office**

**Jerry Wilmore, Operations Superintendent**

330 Broadway

P.O. Box 67, Hartsville, TN 37074

615-374-2986

**Scottsville Office**

**Blanton Calvert, Operations Superintendent**

620 Veterans Memorial Highway

P.O. Box 479, Scottsville, KY 42164

270-237-4418

**Tompkinsville Office**

**Mike Davis, Operations Superintendent**

919 N. Main

P.O. Box 278, Tompkinsville, KY 42167

270-487-6761

**Westmoreland Office**

**Blanton Calvert, Operations Superintendent**

5108 Austin Peay Hwy.

P.O. Box 178, Westmoreland, TN 37186

615-644-2221

**Tri-County EMC Board of Directors**

District B

**Bret Carver, President, Burkesville, KY**

District C

**Ronald Bailey, Vice-President, Celina, TN**

District L

**Ray Goad, Secretary-Treasurer, Lafayette, TN**

District E

**George Cowan, Edmonton, KY**

District F

**Jeff Downing, Ft. Run, KY**

District H

**Tommy Thompson, Hartsville, TN**

District R

**Jack Osgatharp, Red Boiling Sprgs, TN**

District S

**Mike Miller, Scottsville, TN**

District T

**Veachel Harlan, Tompkinsville, TN**

District W

**Tony Bentle, Westmoreland, TN**

Attorney

**Ken Witcher, Lafayette, TN**

# AS I SEE IT

## You're Invited!

On Thursday, May 5, 2016, Tri-County Electric will be holding our annual meeting at Trousdale County High School in Hartsville, Tennessee, and I hope you will be able to attend!

While annual meetings are required of rural electric cooperatives, including Tri-County Electric, to provide a report to the members, we do our best to make the evening one you and your family will enjoy.

From bucket truck rides to our safety trailer demonstration; from having your child's name airbrushed on a Tri-County Electric t-shirt or having his/her picture drawn by a caricaturist; from visiting various booths for more information to eating a snack before the business meeting; we believe you'll find something to enjoy!

If none of those things are enough to convince you to join us, we'll draw a \$100 winner from members present when we start the business meeting. The business meeting will not be lengthy and you'll hear reports from me, our attorney, and special guests regarding your

cooperative as well as our statewide organizations in Kentucky and Tennessee.

After the business meeting adjourns we will have a drawing for door prizes, including iPads

for lucky students in the Tri-County Electric service area as well as his/her school, and the grand prize drawing for a pickup truck!

Even if you are unable to join us for this year's annual meeting, I hope you will take into consideration the fact that as a member,

you are an owner of Tri-County Electric. While most of us would not be invited to a meeting of the shareholders of an investor-owned utility, you can rest assured that meeting would be much different than what we will enjoy at Tri-County Electric's annual meeting of the members!

Once again, I invite you to join us at Trousdale County High School in Hartsville, Tennessee, on Thursday, May 5, when the doors will open at 5:30 p.m. and our business meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.



Paul Thompson,  
*Executive Vice-President  
& General Manager,  
Tri-County Electric*

# MEMBERS ONLY!

## Joint memberships

Are you a member of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation? Many people who believe they are our members discover they are not when they are unable to vote and register for the prizes at the annual meeting. Couples assume that because they are married and one spouse is a member that both are automatically members. However, unless a joint membership is specified, the membership is an individual one.

Joint memberships require no additional membership costs. If you would like a joint membership, please fill out the application with this article and mail or deliver it to your local TCEMC office. A joint membership entitles the holders to only one vote between the couple. At any business meeting, either the husband or wife may vote. If both are present, however, only one vote can be made.

## Deceased members

As a corporation, TCEMC is required to operate according to certain rules and regulations (bylaws). These rules are specific regarding the eligibility of voting members. If the membership is in the name of a deceased individual, no surviving family member may vote in the deceased person's name. When a member dies, that membership terminates.

However, we can easily process a valid request to change a membership from the name of the deceased person to that of the nonmember spouse. Again, there is no cost for this process. Any local office can process these requests. Also, at this year's annual meeting, we will process requests on-site. Once the change is processed, the new member may vote.

---

## Application to convert membership to joint membership with spouse

I, \_\_\_\_\_, whose mailing address is, \_\_\_\_\_  
*(print name)*

\_\_\_\_\_, am a member of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation.

Pursuant to Section 1.04 of the bylaws, I do hereby request that my membership be converted into a joint membership between myself and my spouse, whose name is \_\_\_\_\_.  
*(print spouse's name)*

The location of the premises which is served in connection with my membership is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_  
*(member's signature)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am the spouse of the above-named member of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation, and I do hereby request that I become a joint member of Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation with my said spouse. I agree to purchase electric power and energy from the cooperative and to be bound by and to comply with all of the provisions of the cooperative's charter (including Articles of Conversions) and bylaws and all rules, regulations, rate classifications, and rate schedules established pursuant thereto, as all the same now exist or may hereafter be adopted or amended. I further agree to be jointly obligated with my said spouse for all previous or future charges of the cooperative in connection with this membership.

This \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_  
*(spouse's signature)*

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

*Owned by you, working for you*



## **Tri-County** *Electric*

### 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Tommy Thompson, Director District H (Hartsville); Daniel Jones, Lineman First Class; Wayne Cato, Service Foreman; Denise Blair, Customer Service Representative; Treva Marshall, Customer Service Representative; Paul Thompson, Executive V.P. & General Manager; William Perry, Meter Reader/Collector; Johnathan Marsh, Field Engineer Technician



**At left:** Jim Beecham, Tri-County Electric Director of Engineering; Lewis C. Beasley Jr., Owner, Beasley Construction, LLC; Mayor Carroll Carman, Hartsville-Trousdale County Mayor; Paul Thompson, Tri-County Electric Executive V.P. & General Manager; Tammy Dixon, Tri-County Electric Manager of Marketing/Key Accounts; Mark Beeler, Chairman, Hartsville-Trousdale County Commission; Tommy Thompson, Tri-County Electric Director District H (Hartsville); Betty Lou Taylor, Hartsville-Trousdale County Attorney

Residents in Hartsville-Trousdale County, Tennessee, understand that in today's world, those without Internet access are at a serious competitive disadvantage. Tri-County Electric began working with Trousdale County community leaders nearly three years ago to try and find a solution that would provide everyone in the county access to broadband. While it has been a slower process than expected, Tri-County Electric remains committed to our partnership with community leaders and will continue to work for a successful outcome.

**Tri-County Electric is proud to be unique.**

We are unique in that we are a cooperative business, owned by you, working for you, and guided by The Seven Cooperative Principles,

# THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

which 171 years after they were first written, are still relevant today.

This annual report highlights the achievements Tri-County Electric has made by adhering to these principles.

For instance, we rely on the

principle of **Cooperation Among Cooperatives** as we work with our partner co-ops to deal with new EPA regulations.

Tri-County Electric member-owners enjoy inexpensive and reliable electricity thanks to

TVA's coal-fired plants and expansive generation mix. As the EPA's Clean Power Plan places steep limits on carbon emissions from those plants, we are working with our national association and a network of 900 co-ops across the country to craft

innovative solutions and a united response.

While the regulations ultimately impact how your energy is generated, our mission of safe, reliable, and affordable electric service does not change.

## KEEPING ENERGY AFFORDABLE

The principles of **Open and Voluntary Membership and Democratic Member Control** ensure you have a say in how Tri-County Electric does business.

Elected by you, our board of directors sets policy and hires

an Executive Vice President and General Manager, who in turn hires professionals to carry out our mission.

Tri-County Electric exerts its **Autonomy and Independence** in crafting strategy and hiring decisions.

We employ experts in the fields of engineering and operations, information technology, communications, member services, and community and economic development. Some of the best, brightest, most creative, and dedicated people have chosen careers that serve their communities working at Tri-County Electric.

### HOW REGULATIONS IMPACT YOUR ELECTRIC RATES

Current and yet-to-be implemented regulations affect the cost to generate electricity. To comply, TVA, our generation and transmission power supplier, has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in environmental control equipment.

Because the new EPA regulations will force TVA to use less coal to generate electricity, we expect to see energy prices gradually increase for our member-owners over the next

several years.

We take our **Members' Economic Participation** very seriously as we watch out for your interests. Unlike investor-owned utilities, Tri-County Electric does not create profits for investors and shareholders. Any excess dollars or margins are reinvested in the cooperative.

We offer energy evaluations, leveled billing, bank draft, due date selection, and a prepay program to encourage energy efficiency and assist our member-owners with the management of their monthly bill.

### STAYING SAFE AND STAYING INFORMED

Since delivery of electricity is a complex process, Tri-County Electric places a high value on providing **Education, Training, and Information**. Working with the Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives' and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Associations' Safety & Loss Prevention team, we are proud of our safety record.

Timely and important information about your electric cooperative and member benefits can be found on [www.tcemc.org](http://www.tcemc.org), in the *Kentucky Living* and *Tennessee* magazines, as well as on Facebook.

### YOUR COMMUNITY IS OUR COMMUNITY

Your cooperative employees are your neighbors. Because of our **Concern for Community**, we support and participate in the communities we serve. You'll see co-op employees volunteering for local community groups, conducting school safety programs, and sponsoring local events.

Each day, Tri-County Electric remembers who owns our cooperative—you do. Thank you for your trust as we celebrate our 80th Anniversary, and we remain guided by The Seven Cooperative Principles in each of our decisions to protect and improve the quality of life for our communities.

*Below: Ricky Sheffield, Energy Services Technician, recently presented Tri-County Electric's safety demonstration trailer to students at Cumberland County Elementary School. The safety trailer demonstration is requested at schools and numerous organizations throughout Tri-County Electric's service area.*



## ACTIVE ACCOUNTS

(as of June 30, 2015)

Adair .....	146
Allen .....	10,626
Barren .....	712
Clay.....	4,645
Clinton .....	29
Cumberland .....	4,537
Jackson.....	24
Macon .....	11,994
Metcalfe .....	2,192
Monroe .....	6,589
Overton.....	52
Smith .....	19
Sumner.....	5,928
Trousdale.....	4,133
Warren .....	2
Total.....	51,628

## ACCOUNTS BILLED

2015..... 51,628

Average Kilowatt-hour Use (Residential per month)

2015..... 1296

Miles of Line ..... 5626

Consumers Per Mile (2015)..... 9.18

## NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is the recipient of federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability and, where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Those with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotope, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call toll-free 866-632-9992 (voice), 800-877-8339 (TDD) or 866-377-8642 (relay voice users). USDA is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

Tri-County Electric  
P.O. Box 40  
Lafayette, TN 37083  
615-666-2111

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

For the Year Ending June 30, 2015

Operating Revenue .....	\$115,716,596
Operating Expense	
Purchased Power .....	87,570,164
Operating System.....	16,051,130
Depreciation .....	6,684,915
Taxes .....	934,473
Interest on Loans .....	1,353,362
Total Cost of Electric Service .....	\$112,594,044
Operating Margins .....	\$3,122,552
Non-Operating Margins .....	386,635
Margins Reinvested in System Assets .....	3,509,187

## BALANCE SHEET

For the Year Ending June 30, 2015

### ASSETS

Total Utility Plant (After Depreciation).....	\$126,033,596
Other Assets	
RED Loans .....	1,096,774
Deferred Debits .....	3,939,843
CFC Investments.....	1,714,562
Weatherization Loans.....	1,640,115
	8,391,294

### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and Temporary Investments .....	9,751,732
Accounts Receivable .....	4,900,102
Materials and Supplies .....	1,563,428
Other Current Assets.....	8,882,132
	25,097,394

Total Assets .....

### MEMBERS LIABILITIES AND EQUITIES

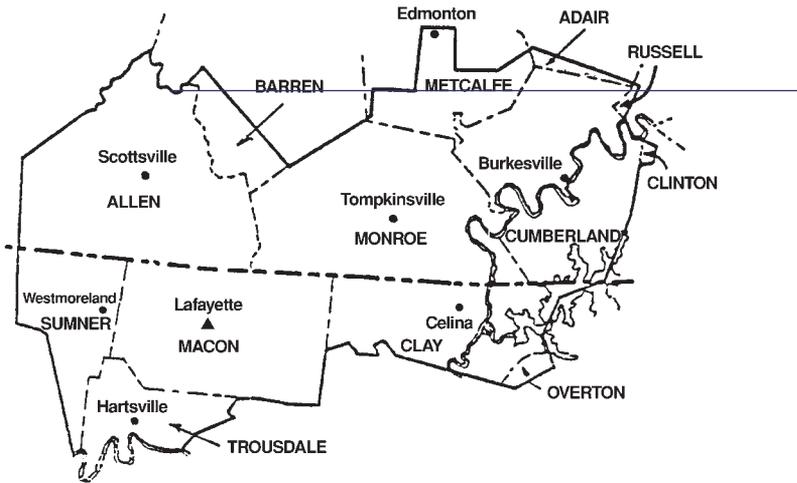
Total Members Equity.....	105,909,112
Long Term Debt and Other Liabilities .....	
Long-Term Debt - RUS .....	(2,925,234)
Long-Term Debt - FFB .....	26,428,247
Long-Term Debt - CFC .....	3,512,690
Advance from TVA Weatherization Loan .....	1,684,341
Other .....	5,473,657
	34,173,701

### CURRENT LIABILITIES

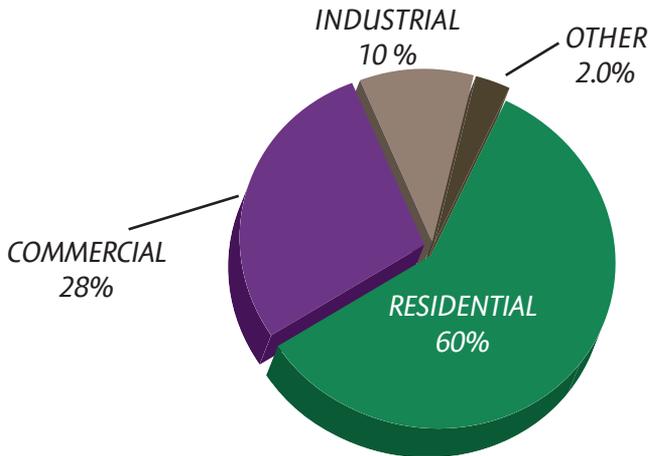
Accounts Payable .....	14,122,542
Consumer Guaranty Deposits .....	2,421,904
Accrued Taxes, Interest, and Other.....	2,895,025
	19,439,471

Total Equities and Liabilities .....

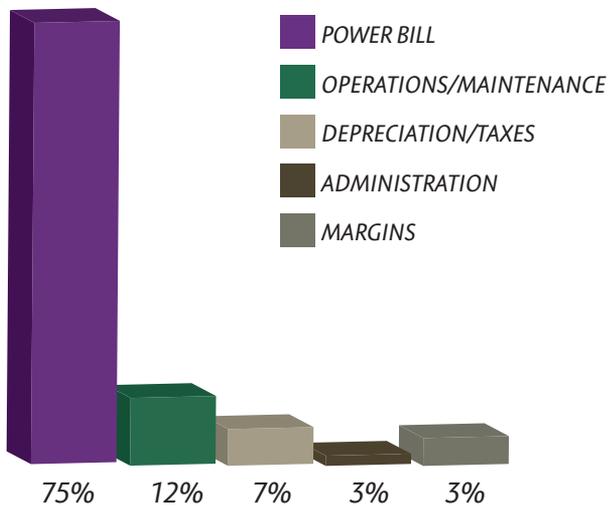
## SERVICE AREA



## REVENUE SOURCES



## MAJOR COSTS



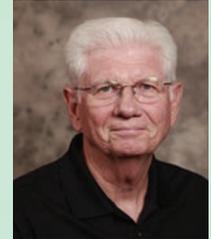
Bret Carver  
President



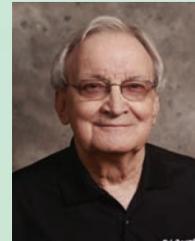
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Vice President



Ray Goad  
Secretary-Treasurer



Tony Bentle



George Cowan



Jeff Downing



Veachel Harlan



Mike Miller



Jack Osgatharp



Tommy Thompson



Ken Witcher  
Attorney



Paul Thompson  
Executive Vice President  
and General Manager

# Official Notice of Annual Meeting

**Where:** Trousdale County High School  
262 McMurray Blvd. West, Hartsville, Tennessee

**When:** Thursday, May 5, 2016

**Registration Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Business Meeting Time:** 7:00 p.m.

The annual membership meeting of this co-op organizes to take action on the following matters:

1. Report on the number of members present in person in order to determine the existence of a quorum
2. Reading of the notice of the meeting and proof of the due publication or mailing thereof, or the waiver or waivers of notice of the meeting, as the case may be
3. Reading of approved meeting of the members and the taking of necessary action thereon
4. Presentation and consideration of reports of officers, trustees, and committees
5. Report on the election of board members
6. Unfinished business
7. New business (or other business if properly raised)
8. Adjournment

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- FREE Food and Ice Cream
- Registration Gifts
- Bucket Truck Rides/Safety Trailer Demo
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Offer subject to change based on premium channel availability. Not available with certain packages. Regular monthly prices apply after 3 months unless you call to cancel.

**FREE**

**HD**  
For Life

Available with qualifying packages.

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutopay

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**\$14.95**

Restrictions Apply.  
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April 2016 [www.tnmagazine.org](http://www.tnmagazine.org)

# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



## Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative

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Savannah, TN 38372  
731-925-4916  
866-925-4916  
www.tvec.com

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Waynesboro, TN 38485  
931-722-5441

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8 a.m.-4:45 p.m.

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**Haskel Jerrolds** (District 3)

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### Director of Member Services and Safety

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### Purchasing Agent

Tony Polk

## AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

### Critical connections behind the power

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it's appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgement. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — a lot more work is taking place behind the scenes.

#### Promoting a culture of safety

The Operations and Engineering Department ensures that the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. Safety is an equally important area of focus. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count on the Operations and Engineering Department to ensure they have access

to everything from lighting to heating and cooling and so much more.

#### Calling for energy efficiency

Member service representatives answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. The Member Services Department is responsible for ensuring that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the time you sign up for membership. This department is also responsible for the co-op's annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools, and communications such as this local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

#### Delivering timely savings

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail, often on a date that you have specified. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While we are a member-owned cooperative and operate differently than investor-owned utilities, we are



Gerald Taylor  
General Manager,  
Tennessee Valley  
Electric Cooperative

still a business. As such, the Accounting Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds our expenses. Typical expenses include the money we pay for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employee salaries and other expenditures.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. This department handles recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to our members. For example, Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative sponsors youth scholarships and an

educational trip to Washington, D.C. as part of the Youth Tour program each summer.

### Staying in sync

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart. From sponsoring local youth to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. And it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, more than 900 electric co-ops, including Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

**National Lineman Appreciation Day**  
*Monday, April 11*

Please take the opportunity to thank Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative's linemen for the dangerous work they perform daily to make our lives better.

 Ty Gray	 Patrick McIn	 Brad Blount	 Darrell Jerrolds	 Stan Harris	 Randy Cossey	 Brandon Casteel	 Jody Roberson
 Joseph C. Lay	<p><b>National Lineman Appreciation Day</b>  <i>Monday, April 11</i></p> <p>Please take the opportunity to thank Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative's linemen for the dangerous work they perform daily to make our lives better.</p>						 Ronnie Wilkerson
 Danny Moore							 Eddie Berry
 Stoney Lynn	 Jerry Wayne Franks	 Wayne Gipson	 Tracy Martin	 Richard Moore	 Ronnie Mathis	 Harold McWilliams	 Randal Webb

# Pickwick Road construction to blame for outages

**T**ennessee Valley Electric Cooperative recently experienced three outages in Savannah. Each was related to the construction on Pickwick Road. The below-ground utilities — such as gas, water and sewer — along with the overhead electric lines must be moved to allow room for the road to be widened. Numerous workers are on or very near the energized lines, and their safety is TVEC’s primary concern. While this work is going on, the circuit breakers feeding these two lines must be set to open immediately for safety reasons if they sense anything abnormal.

Normally, a circuit breaker will open and close back three times before staying off if it senses a problem. This provides reliability on the system, for example, if the problem is an animal or tree limb contacting a line temporarily. If the system were left “normal” and a track hoe or worker made a mistake, someone would be exposed to a much greater risk of injury.

These lines feed a large portion of south Savannah. If anything happens on the line — even away from the construction site — such as a squirrel on the line, the breaker will open instantly. Only one of the outages we have experienced was caused directly by one of the road construction’s contractors. Since work is being performed very near the Savannah substation, no other options are available to ensure workers’ safety.

We realized that many member-owners, including businesses and industries, are on these lines. The TVEC office is also near these lines, and the co-op is closely monitoring this situation. Please call if your power is off. TVEC crews will be dispatched immediately to restore the power as fast as safely possible.



*Electrical contractors install a jumper while the line on Pickwick Road is “hot.”*



*Large equipment like this track hoe must dig deep trenches right beside the existing lines.*

We ask for your patience as we work with the contractors to complete a much-needed project in Savannah. Safety is always the first priority when working on or near electricity.

# Waynesboro City Park to host Seventh Annual Butterfly 5K Run/Walk

**O**n Saturday, June 4, rain or shine, runners will line up for the Seventh Annual Butterfly 5K at 8 a.m. at the Waynesboro City Park. Last year, more than 600 runners registered to participate, each hoping to receive one of the trophies given to the fastest male and female in each age group as well as the 1-mile fun run. Regardless of the winners, the first 600 runners to cross the finish line will receive medals.

The 5K is one of the major fundraisers for the Butterfly Foundation. Proceeds have helped more than 160 children and their families in Wayne County and the surrounding areas. The foundation has distributed more than \$309,000 to these families, and 100 percent of the sponsorship money from the event goes toward assisting children with life-threatening illnesses. The Butterfly Foundation is a public charity under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

For additional information or to become a sponsor for the event, contact Jim Beavers at 931-722-3658 or [beaverslumber@gmail.com](mailto:beaverslumber@gmail.com). A

downloadable registration form can be found at [thebutterflyfoundation.info](http://thebutterflyfoundation.info), and online registration is available at [butterfly5k.itsyourrace.com](http://butterfly5k.itsyourrace.com). Registration fee is \$18 before May 19 or \$20 the day of race (includes T-shirt and refreshments.) Visit the Facebook for “The Butterfly Foundation, Ryleigh remembered.”



*The Annual Butterfly 5K Run/Walk returns to Waynesboro's City Park Saturday, June 4.*

## Tamper-resistant receptacles are permanent safety solutions

**N**early seven children a day are shocked or burned when they slide keys, pins, paper clips and other small objects into electrical outlets in their homes, according to the Electrical Safety Foundation International. Up to a dozen of them die each year.

That means each room in your house that has an electrical outlet — and that's probably every single room — presents a danger to your children. It costs about \$2 per outlet to replace your old ones with updated, tamper-

resistant versions designed with a built-in shutter system that prevents objects from entering the slots. Plugs can still fit into the slots, however, when equal pressure is applied to each side.

Tamper-resistant receptacles are safer than removable outlet caps because children can't detach them.

The National Electrical Code requires new homes to come with tamper-resistant receptacles, but it's up to the owners of older homes to upgrade their outlets.

# Take a break from technology

By Meghaan Evans

**M**any people complain that it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days. As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do. In fact, device dependence has become so severe, even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to “soak-up” and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Not only is device dependence detrimental to our cognitive development, it can also strain our relationships. Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this daydreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).
- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.
- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all your

push notifications so they don't distract you from the task at hand.

- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: Start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking his or her phone or playing a video game. Offer a fun treat as an incentive for them to win!
- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.
- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens.

We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

*Meghaan Evans writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

## Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund

**C**elebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, by making your home more energy-efficient.

Below are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.
3. Call Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

**3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**1** Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

**2** DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.

**3** Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

3. Call Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



Flying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
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# THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

Eleanor Ford  
*A Community Calling*

Travel Guide:  
Find Your Park

Mary Neely's  
Story of Survival

Strawberry Time



We're on a mission to set the neighborhood standard.  
With the most dependable equipment, we create spectacular spaces.  
We thrive on the fresh air, the challenge and the results of our efforts.  
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*Eleanor Ford has been a child star, beauty pageant winner and educator. But her neighbors and friends know her as a leader in Trousdale County. Photograph by Robin Conover*

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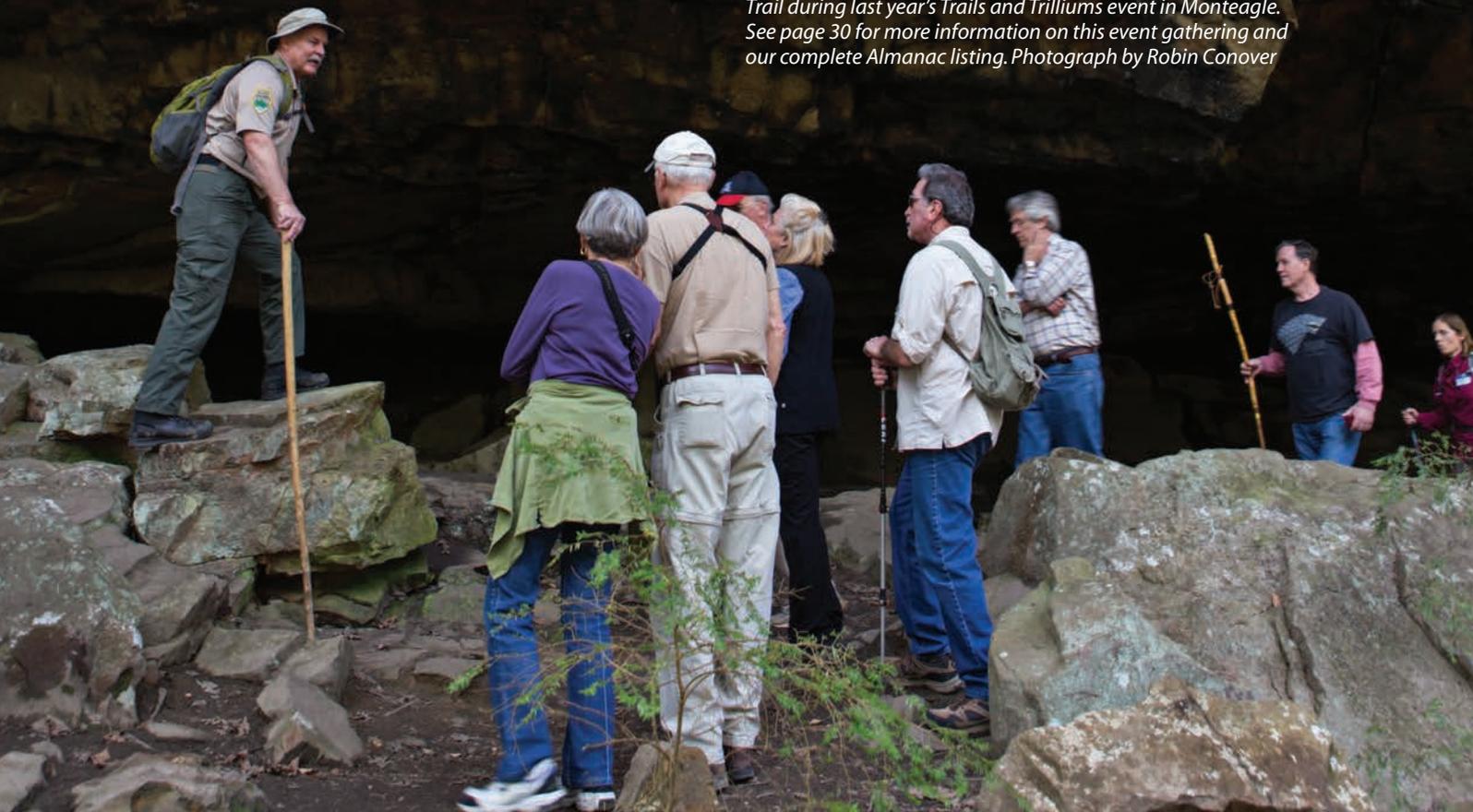
Tennessee's poets share their voices.

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*Randy Hedgepath, Tennessee State Parks state naturalist, left, talks about the Cave Spring rock shelter along the Fiery Gizzard Trail during last year's Trails and Trilliums event in Monteagle. See page 30 for more information on this event gathering and our complete Almanac listing. Photograph by Robin Conover*



## The Tennessee Magazine

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## TENNESSEE TODAY *Manager's Viewpoint*

# Dealing with polarization

**W**e are several primaries into a presidential election year, and even the most experienced political observer seems astounded by the level of polarization that exists in our country. The right hates the left; Democrats distrust Republicans — you get the point.

Depending on whom you ask, it's obviously the other party's fault. Armchair observers will contend that we've never been this divided. At times, the political system seems almost to the point of brokenness.

Fact is that polarization is nothing new. However, the gap may be widening. The Pew Research Center, which has been tracking political polarization for almost 30 years, says our "values and basic beliefs are more polarized along partisan lines than at any point in the past 25 years." In a recent report, Pew goes on to state that "unlike in 1987, when this series of surveys began, the values gap between Republicans and Democrats is now greater than gender, age, race or class divides."

Though polarization (of a different sort) is a good thing when it comes to motors and other machines that depend on electricity, political polarization becomes terribly distracting when you're trying to operate an electric utility.

The electric utility business is an industry of "absolutes." Electricity behaves in a constant and predictable manner. Yet, energy policy is determined in the world of politics. Over the years, despite partisan polarization, political battles and the whims and desires of various interest groups, we've fashioned a reliable, resilient electric grid.

Today's electric grid is an interconnected network owned by electric cooperatives, municipal systems and investor-owned electric companies. It wasn't always that way. There was quite a political fight in the 1930s before much of the nation was electrified with the help of the Rural Electrification Administration. The same is true for the creation and evolution of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

From our beginnings, electric cooperatives have been deeply involved in politics.

In those early days, there were fights in the boardrooms of huge corporations, state assemblies and Congress. It wasn't easy, and rural electrification didn't happen overnight.

Over the decades, we've learned to navigate political obstacles.

Decisions made in the legislative hallways impact not only the cost of electricity but also its dependability. Because of our commitment to our communities, we have been able to fashion bipartisan support, which is fitting as our cooperative members span the spectrum in their political leanings.

For example, we have members who applaud the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Clean Power Plan, and we have members who believe it is overreach of the EPA's authority. While electric cooperatives are on record opposing the

Clean Power Plan, we are proven leaders in renewable-energy generation and energy-efficiency efforts. Our opposition doesn't mean that we are opposed to the goals of the plan. We just believe there are better ways to accomplish them — ways that will allow us to maintain a reliable, affordable supply of power.

How do we deal with polarization on energy policy? The first step is the belief that reasonable people can disagree. The next is education — for those of us in the electric utility industry and for those who want to dramatically change our business. If we only listen to people who "think like us," we may never see the other side of an issue.

It goes back to the fact that electricity behaves in a constant and predictable manner. Our political efforts have never been driven by greed. They are centered on maintaining our ability to provide power for our cooperatives. We know that we need an ample supply of affordable electricity to power our communities, and we must fulfill this commitment in an environmentally responsible manner. We try to maintain that balanced approach even when navigating the shifting sands of the political landscape. ■



**David Callis**  
*General Manager,*  
*Tennessee Electric*  
*Cooperative*  
*Association*

No Contract

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“Cell phones have gotten so small, I can barely dial mine.” Not Jitterbug®, it features a larger keypad for easier dialing. It even has an oversized display so you can actually see it.

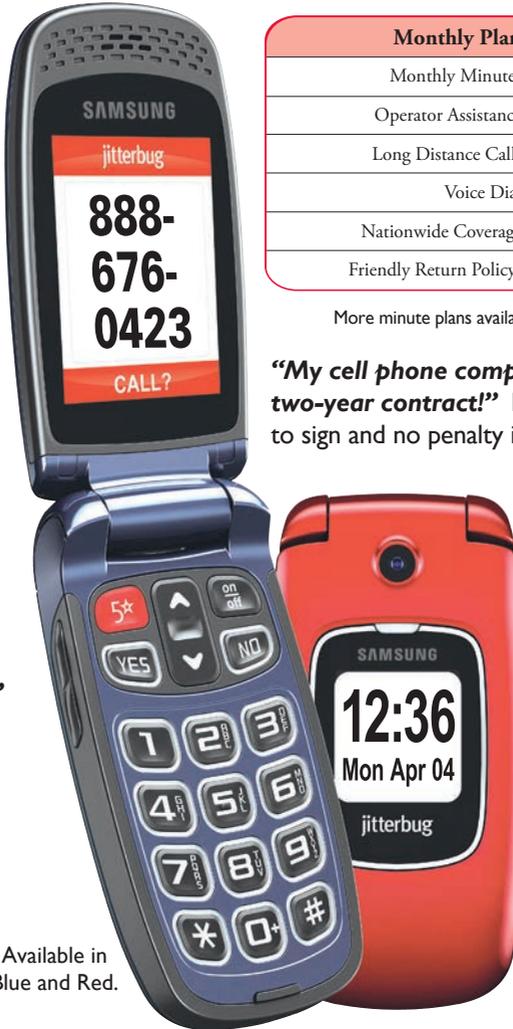
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“I tried my sister’s cell phone... I couldn’t hear it.” Jitterbug is designed with a powerful speaker. There’s an adjustable volume control, and Jitterbug is hearing-aid compatible.

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Available in Blue and Red.

Monthly Plan	\$14.99	\$19.99
Monthly Minutes	was 50 NOW 200	was 200 NOW 600
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Long Distance Calls	No add'l charge	No add'l charge
Voice Dial	FREE	FREE
Nationwide Coverage	YES	YES
Friendly Return Policy <sup>1</sup>	30 days	30 days

More minute plans available. Ask your Jitterbug expert for details.

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**Enough talk.** Isn’t it time you found out more about the cell phone that’s changing all the rules? Call now, Jitterbug product experts are standing by.

Order now and receive a **FREE Car Charger** for your Jitterbug – a \$25 value. Call now!

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QUICK LOOK



Win a mountain vacation from us

Page 10

The National Park Service turns 100 this year. Celebrate by visiting one of the 15 locations in Tennessee managed by the service, and enter to win a Smoky Mountain vacation from *The Tennessee Magazine*.



Berry Good

Page 32 and [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org)

Strawberry season in Tennessee lasts for a precious few weeks, but these recipes will help you enjoy their sweet flavor all summer long.



Energy Efficiency Q&A

Page 27

Summer will be here before we know it. Our energy expert Pat Keegan tells you what to do to get your home ready for the hot days ahead.

Pinterested?

Follow *The Tennessee Magazine* on Pinterest for recipes, energy tips and more. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



CO-OP Concerns

Manager's Viewpoint

A real win-win

Do you believe that a win-win scenario really exists? When I say the phrase “win-win,” I mean a situation where each party involved benefits, or a good result is provided for everyone. In our highly competitive society, does that ever actually happen? For the past several weeks, I have been, like millions of other Americans, engrossed in the competition, buzzer-beaters and overtime thrillers that make up March Madness. Win or go home, not win-win, is the motto du jour.



Mike Knotts  
Director of  
Government Affairs

While winner-takes-all makes for an exciting basketball game, it could create a brutal result in other areas of life. What if we only awarded Eagle Scout to the first boy in his troop who finishes, regardless of any others meeting the qualifications? What about the car wash fundraiser or bake sale for a church youth group? Should only one person see the benefit of the group’s work? Perhaps only those who actively pay income taxes should be protected by the United States military.

Are these examples a little over the top? Sure. But I hope you can see the logic behind them. There are times when the greater good demands that everyone finds a way to win. Unfortunately, the ethos of our politics has been dumbed-down recently to a simple, “I win; you lose.” And our politicians increasingly reflect that mentality.

I’m proud that your electric co-op is, in fact, playing a part in a few win-win situations that will literally change the lives of millions of people. Today, the continent of Africa is home to nearly 1 billion people. And two-thirds of those people live without access to electricity. No lights, no refrigeration, no running water, no air conditioning — none of the basic necessities you and I take for granted on a daily basis. That is 600 million people, twice the population of the United States, living in a world that would be unrecognizable to just about anyone you know.

Electric co-ops know the role they can play to turn the lights on in sub-Saharan Africa (and many other parts of the world). That’s because in the 1930s, 90 percent of rural farms in the U.S. lacked access to electricity. Your co-op was founded to solve that problem, and universal electrification is now a reality for everyone in this country.

This heritage is why your local co-op likely participates in some way with the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s International Foundation. There are so many ways the men and women of co-op nation have helped: perhaps by shipping used tools

and equipment to new co-ops in the Philippines, donating money to offset the costs of purchasing transformers and steel cable or even personally traveling the corners of the Earth to share the knowledge of how to build an electric grid.

I’m pleased to report that Washington, D.C., is still capable of recognizing a good thing when it comes around. In February of this year, the Electrify Africa Act became law after years of work from many, many fine people, including the NRECA International Foundation. This legislation will literally turn the lights on for millions of people, creating a quality of life they could never have hoped for before. By leveraging the involvement of private industry six-fold beyond that of the government, the United States will soon see new markets for future trade in addition to the improvement of the basic human condition for millions of our fellow human beings across the ocean.

I’m especially proud that our own Sen. Bob Corker sponsored the legislation and had the foresight, wisdom and discernment to lead his colleagues in Congress. I don’t know how he’s done on his NCAA tournament bracket, but he certainly has shown that he understands a win-win when he sees it. Well done, Sen. Corker. ■



**SUPER COUPON**

**RAPID PUMP® 1.5 TON ALUMINUM RACING JACK**  
PITTSBURGH AUTOMOTIVE

SAVE \$60

LOT 69252  
68053/62160  
62496/62516  
60569 shown

• 3-1/2 Pumps Lifts  
• Most Vehicles  
• Weighs 32 lbs.

**\$59.99** comp at \$119.99

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**SUPER COUPON**

**20% OFF**

ANY SINGLE ITEM

Limit 1 coupon per customer per day. Save 20% on any 1 item purchased. \*Cannot be used with other discount, coupon or any of the following items or brands: Inside Track Club membership, extended service plan, gift card, open box item, 3 day parking lot sale item, compressors, floor jacks, saw mills, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, trenchers, welders, Admiral, CoverPro, Baytown, Diabolo, Franklin, Hercules, Holt, Jupiter, Predator, Silk-Tek, StormCall, Union, Vanguard, Viking. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 8/1/16.

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WITH ANY PURCHASE

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LOT 90899 shown  
98025/69096

**\$15 VALUE**

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38029883

**SUPER COUPON**

SAVE 66%

**MECHANIC'S GLOVES**

SIZE	LOT
MED	62434/62426
LG	62433/62428
X-LG	62432/62429

**HARDY**

Customer Rating

YOUR CHOICE

**\$3.99** comp at \$11.99

Item 62429 shown

38044778

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**SUPER COUPON**

**2.5 HP, 21 GALLON 125 PSI VERTICAL AIR COMPRESSOR**

**CENTRALPNEUMATIC**

Customer Rating

LOT 69091/67847 shown  
61454/61693/62803

SAVE \$339

**\$159.99** comp at \$499

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**WOW SUPER COUPON**

"Impressive Accuracy. Amazing Value" - Car Craft Magazine

**TORQUE WRENCHES**

PITTSBURGH PRO

Customer Rating

SAVE 60%

Accuracy within ±4%

YOUR CHOICE

**\$19.99** comp at \$29.99

DRIVE LOT

1/4"	2696/61277
3/8"	807/61276
1/2"	62431/239

Item 239 shown

38011431

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**SUPER COUPON**

**BADLAND 2500 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH WIRELESS REMOTE CONTROL**

Customer Rating

SAVE \$100

**\$59.99** comp at \$159.99

LOT 61258 shown  
61840/61297/68146

38019567

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**SUPER COUPON**

**SUPER-WIDE TRI-FOLD ALUMINUM LOADING RAMP**

HaulMaster

LOT 90018 shown  
69595/60334

• 1500 lb. capacity

Customer Rating

SAVE \$100

**\$79.99** comp at \$179.99

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**SUPER COUPON**

**ELECTRIC CHAIN SAW SHARPENER**

CHICAGO ELECTRIC POWER TOOLS

LOT 61613/68221 shown

Customer Rating

SAVE 44%

4-1/4" grinding wheel included.

**\$27.99** comp at \$49.99

38048931

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**WOW SUPER COUPON**

SAVE \$180

**US\*GENERAL TOOL CART**

LOT 69397/61427/95272 shown

Customer Rating

• 704 lb. capacity

**\$169.99** comp at \$349.99

38053125

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**SUPER COUPON**

**29 PIECE TITANIUM NITRIDE COATED HIGH SPEED DRILL BIT SET**

NEW

LOT 61637 shown  
5889/62281

Customer Rating

SAVE 75%

**\$14.99** comp at \$59.97

38012281

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**SUPER COUPON**

**SOLAR ROPE LIGHT**

one stop gardens

LOT 62533  
68353 shown

Customer Rating

SAVE 66%

• 16 ft. lit, 22 ft. long

**\$9.99** comp at \$29.97

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**WOW SUPER COUPON**

**FOLDABLE ALUMINUM SPORTS CHAIR**

LOT 62314/63066  
66383 shown

Customer Rating

SAVE 55%

**\$21.99** comp at \$49.97

• 250 lb. capacity

38041021

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**SUPER COUPON**

**1500 WATT DUAL TEMPERATURE HEAT GUN (572°/1112°)**

drillmaster

LOT 62340/62546  
63104/96289 shown

Customer Rating

SAVE 70%

**\$8.99** comp at \$29.97

38053043

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**SUPER COUPON**

**20 TON SHOP PRESS**

CENTRAL MACHINERY

• Pair of arbor plates included

LOT 32879  
60603 shown

Customer Rating

SAVE \$210

**\$159.99** comp at \$369.99

38044842

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**WOW SUPER COUPON**

**8750 PEAK/7000 RUNNING WATTS 13 HP (420 CC) GAS GENERATORS**

LOT 68530/63086/63085/69671 shown  
LOT 68525/69677/63087/63088 CALIFORNIA ONLY  
PREDATOR GENERATORS

Customer Rating

SAVE \$443

• 76 dB Noise Level

**\$555.55** comp at \$999

38024946

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# Leadership as a Labor of Love

Hartsville's Eleanor Ford serves her community, fights for positive change and never backs down

Story by Ron Bell • Photographs by Robin Conover

**E**leanor Ford has covered a lot of ground in her 91 years. Most folks who meet the soft-spoken Southern lady in her hometown of Hartsville are surprised to discover she was a child star, appearing as Baby Eleanor on radio shows across the country, or that decades later she was Tennessee's first competitor in Ms. Senior USA, finishing in the top 10 in the national pageant in Atlantic City in 1991. But what doesn't surprise anyone is that Eleanor Ford is one of Trousdale County's most beloved citizens, having been an ambassador for positive change in her community for as long as anyone can remember.

As soft-spoken and unassuming as Eleanor may be, she is certainly no softie when it comes to her hometown and the people she has called her neighbors for decades. Those who know her best speak of her tenacity.



She's been executive director of Trousdale County's Chamber of Commerce, an instructor at Volunteer State Community College in Hendersonville, a florist for more than 30 years and a Brownie Scout Troop leader, and she is still the host of a long-running radio show on Hartsville's



Eleanor calls in during "The Friday Morning Show," co-hosted with Jerry Richmond, right. "I don't really know how long we've been doing this," she recalls. "It's been well over 20 years, though." The hour-long show with an open topic features guests and callers. Since a recent broken hip has caused some mobility issues, Eleanor prefers to phone in rather than join Jerry in the studio.

own WTNK, where Eleanor and co-host Jerry Richmond talk about news and current events affecting the community. It airs at 11 a.m. every Friday at 1090 on the AM dial.

So, how does a hard-working mover and shaker like Eleanor Ford become a finalist in a national beauty pageant, becoming Tennessee's first Ms. Senior?

"Actually, I frown on beauty pageants. I don't think they are very productive. But I wanted to show the world that women of a certain age are relevant, and that we can walk and chew gum at the same time," she says with a wise laugh.

What she recalls most about her stint as Ms. Tennessee Senior is how she was able to help people. "It was actually a wonderful time, and it was good for me to get out and talk to women my age and older and give them pep talks."

And her beloved Hartsville also came to mind. "After I won in Tennessee, half of Hartsville went with me to Atlantic City for the national competition. It was a lot of fun. Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation (of which Ms. Ford is a member) even donated money toward my travel expenses. There was so much support from the community."

Her roots as a child star in the early 1930s have certainly shaped her later in life, giving her the confidence and poise so necessary in leadership. Her life as Baby Eleanor still comes up in conversations.

"It all started by doing advertisements for my father's drug store in Louisville, Ken-

*The first Ms. Tennessee Senior, Eleanor Ford proudly traveled and spoke to civic organizations as an ambassador to women over 60 to encourage them and lead by example.*



Above left: An early promotional shot of "Baby Eleanor," as Eleanor Ford was called when she sang and danced on radio shows across the country. Above right, Baby Eleanor with her pianist, Ruth Ann Moore. Eleanor's family always tried to travel together for her appearances. She started singing and dancing on the radio to promote her father's drug store, which was then in Louisville, Kentucky, but she was soon being heard across America.

tucky," she says. "I would sing and dance as Baby Eleanor there in Louisville. Soon we were going to other radio stations all over the country.

"I loved traveling around America and performing. I was just 5, 6, 7 years old. This was in the era of Shirley

Temple and Jane Withers. When we met people in new cities, we would feel like we were meeting our relatives. They were all so nice to us."

Eleanor continues to garner praise from neighbors young and old. Trousdale High School's state-of-the-art auditorium bears her name, acknowledging her tireless efforts to promote the arts, literacy and the overall mission of the board of education there.

District Attorney General Tommy Thompson has known Eleanor for years, working with her on community projects, and recalls, "She has done so much for the community."

"I've always wanted to do my best for everybody," Eleanor says frankly. "It's really just that simple. I headed out and dodged the bullets and just did it. I never backed down." ■



# CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

## Explore Tennessee's National Parks to mark 100 years of the National Park Service

Story by Trish Milburn • Photographs provided by the National Park Service

Sometimes you just need to get away from the hectic pace of modern life, from the noise, from the responsibility, from the worries. You need some peace and quiet to slow down, to get back to basics and appreciate Mother Nature and our nation's history. There are no better places to do those things than the more than 400 units managed by the National Park Service, 15 of which are located completely or partially in Tennessee.

Though Yellowstone became the country's first National Park in 1872, the National Park Service (NPS) itself wasn't created until President Woodrow Wilson signed the act on Aug. 25, 1916. There are currently NPS units in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, Guam and the Virgin Islands. The units, which altogether encompass more than 84 million acres, have several different designations. For instance, Great Smoky Mountains is a National Park. These crown jewels of the National Park Service "preserve nationally and globally significant scenic areas and nature reserves." There are currently 59 National Parks with easily rec-

ognizable names such as Yellowstone, Yosemite, Mammoth Cave, Shenandoah and Grand Canyon. National Monuments such as Devil's Tower or the George Washington Birthplace "preserve a single unique cultural or natural feature." Among other designations are National Battlefield, National Memorial, National Parkway, National Historic Site, National Military Park and several more. Collectively, they are extremely popular with visitors. Last year, more than 307 million people visited the various units.

Tennessee is rich with opportunities to visit and enjoy units of the National Park Service, and some are hosting special events, some continuing all year, to commemorate the NPS centennial.

### Andrew Johnson National Historic Site (Greeneville)

Andrew Johnson was one of three presidents from Tennessee, but he's the only one whose home is operated by the National Park Service (those of Andrew Jackson and James K. Polk are run by private organizations). Johnson became the nation's 17th president upon the assassination of Abraham

Lincoln. His historic homesite in downtown Greeneville includes four parts: the visitor center, his early home, the homestead from before and after his presidency and the national cemetery where Johnson and his family are buried.

At the visitor center, you can watch a 13.5-minute introductory film, tour the presidential museum and Johnson's original tailor shop and browse the Eastern National bookstore. At the two homes, you can explore Johnson's rise from tailor to president.

Adjacent to the site are two items of interest provided by Johnson's estate: a statue of Johnson sculpted by Jim Gray and a replica of Johnson's birthplace in North Carolina.

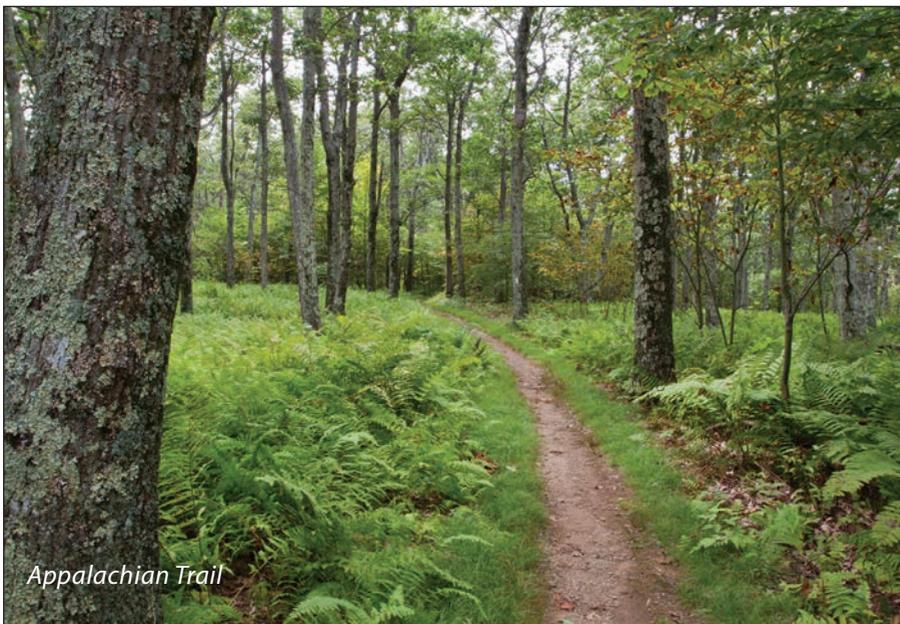
Chief of Interpretation and Education Stephanie Steinhurst says that many of the park's annual events this year will have a centennial theme, and the park is still working on plans for the anniversary events in August. She points out that the park has a lot of original structures where Johnson actually lived and worked.

"Andrew Johnson National Historic Site is well worth visiting," she says.

### Appalachian National Scenic Trail (shared with 13 other states)

The 2,180 miles of the Appalachian Trail capture the imagination and showcase some of the most stunning natural beauty our country has to offer. The trail runs from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mt. Katahdin in Maine and is jointly managed by NPS, the U.S. Forest Service, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, several state agencies and thousands of volunteers. Seventy-one miles are in Tennessee, not including more than 200 miles that run along or near Tennessee's border with North Carolina. Clingman's Dome in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the highest point along the trail at 6,643 feet.

Each year, thousands of people take to the trail. Many are day hikers, but each year more and more backpackers attempt



Appalachian Trail

to through-hike the trail from one end to the other. It's a big undertaking that typically takes five to seven months to complete. Only about one in four hikers who attempt a through-hike succeeds.

To celebrate the 100th birthday of the National Park Service, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail is encouraging people to get outside and hike by offering the chance to take part in the A.T. Hike 100 Challenge. If you complete 100 miles of hiking, at least part of it on the Appalachian Trail, this year, you'll be eligible to receive a limited-edition A.T. Hike 100 decal sticker. You can register to take part and download your hiking log at [nps.gov/appa/planyourvisit/hike-100.htm](https://nps.gov/appa/planyourvisit/hike-100.htm).

### Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (Oneida; shared with Kentucky)

The 125,000 acres of this NPS unit protect the free-flowing Big South Fork of the Cumberland River and its tributaries and is a nature-lover's paradise. And if you like nature photography, well, you're in luck. This area along the Cumberland Plateau is filled with beautiful gorges, sandstone bluffs and arches, flowing water and forested trails. You can even enter your photos in a contest hosted by the recreation area. See [www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/biso-photo-contest.htm](https://www.nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/biso-photo-contest.htm) for more information on the photo contest. Perusing last year's winners is enough to make you want to hop in your car and head to the Big South Fork right now.

In honor of the NPS centennial, Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area (NRRRA) is hosting the Centennial Challenge in which participants are to hike, ride (mountain bike or horseback) and paddle in any combination for 100 miles. There are lots of possibilities to choose from since the recreation area has more than 500 miles of trails and waterways. Participants are encouraged to photograph the scenery during these journeys. Some of these images will be selected to be part of an exhibit at the visitor center and may be used online or in other venues. Those who complete the Centennial Challenge will receive a special patch. For details on how to participate, see [nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/centennial-challenge.htm](https://nps.gov/biso/planyourvisit/centennial-challenge.htm).

### Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park (shared with Georgia)

Scattered across the South are numerous park units that are dedicated to preserving the history of the Civil War and the men who fought and died in that horrible conflict. Not surprisingly, several of these are in Tennessee. At odds with the deadly, bloody battles that once raged in these locations, today the parks on the same land are scenic and peaceful.

While today visitors learn about history here, in the fall of 1863, Union and Confederate soldiers were living it, battling for control of Chattanooga, known as the Gateway to the Deep South. When Federal troops took control of the city in November, the turn of events was called "the death knell of the Confederacy" by one of the Confederate troops.

Chickamauga Battlefield visitors can take a seven-mile, self-guided auto tour, and the visitor center is home to the Fuller Gun Collection, which contains more than 300 examples of military long arms. There are also 45 miles of hiking trails to enjoy as you learn about this segment of the Civil War.

You won't want to miss the Lookout Mountain Battlefield section of the park. Exhibits and a visitor center commemorate this "Battle above the Clouds" and offer a stunning view of Chattanooga and Moccasin Bend along the Tennessee River. Also make time to visit the Moccasin Bend National Archeological District and the Brown's Ferry Federal Road Trace, which is historic because of its connection to both the Trail of Tears and the Civil War. Both areas offer hiking trails.

### Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (shared with Kentucky and Virginia)

Cumberland Gap tells the story of our pioneer years, of when Daniel Boone led settlers along the Wilderness Road into the wilds of Kentucky. Native Americans, buffalo and longhunters all traveled this narrow gap through the Cumberland Mountains. Be-



Cumberland Gap  
National Historical Park  
(Gap Cave)

tween 1775 and 1810, settlers crossed through the Cumberland Gap and into the lands west of the mountains. Today, there is much to learn and explore in the park's 24,000 acres. From mid-May through the end of October, rangers lead tours to the historic Hensley settlement of several log homes, a schoolhouse, blacksmith shop, cemetery and farms.

You can even explore under the park with a ranger-led tour of Gap Cave and learn about its interesting history.

As with other parks throughout the state, Cumberland Gap offers lots of opportunities for hiking. Crisscrossing the park are more than 80 miles of trails ranging from easy and short to the 21-mile Ridge Trail.

Special events highlighting the importance of protecting our cultural heritage and natural treasures are scheduled for April 9-11. In "An American Memoir: From the Hearts of Our Ancestors ... Into the Hands of Our Children," you'll be able to witness why our ancestors made the decisions they did and how those decisions shaped the future of America. Several areas showcasing different slices of America's past through living history exhibits will give visitors the opportunity to interact with the diverse peoples who journeyed through the Gap. The History and Heritage Frontier area will focus on westward expansion and how it affected the Cherokee people. The Legacy of a Lifetime Frontier will allow visitors to meet explorers, shop with 18th-century merchants and tradesmen, try their hands with tools from the era and watch the Legacy film.

"Almost 100 of the 'crème de la crème' of living historians will be on site," says park ranger Pam Eddy. "We're especially excited about living biographer Carl Closs of southeastern Pennsylvania who visitors will truly believe is Gen. George Washington."

The American Treasures Frontier will celebrate 100 years of National Parks by host-



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Great Smoky Mountains National Park (photograph by Robin Conover)

ing rangers from parks in other states such as Yosemite National Park and New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park to share with visitors some of the excitement waiting for them at parks across the country.

At 11 a.m. on April 11, there also will be a special launch ceremony for the new Cumberland Gap quarter. U.S. Mint officials will be on hand to celebrate this addition to the America the Beautiful Quarters Program.

“We’re expecting 10,000-15,000 people to visit the park during that weekend, and we have 2,200 school kids signed up to attend the quarter ceremony,” says Carol Borneman, chief of interpretation for the park.

### Fort Donelson National Battlefield (Dover; shared with Kentucky)

Another park dedicated to the Civil War, Fort Donelson was important for the defense of the Cumberland River. When Confederate forces surrendered there in February 1862, it was only a matter of days before Clarksville and Nashville also came under Union control.

Today, visitors can learn about this historic battle and enjoy the picturesque setting along an 11-stop driving tour. Another segment of the battlefield is in nearby Calloway County, Kentucky. Fort Heiman was a Confederate battery in the Battle of Fort Henry, which occurred a few days before the one at Fort Donelson.

A special event that launched in 2015 and continues this year to commemorate the NPS centennial is the Kentucky Parks Pentathlon. Anyone visiting all five units of the National Park Service in Kentucky (Mammoth Cave National Park, Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historical Park, Big

South Fork NRR, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park and the Fort Heiman unit of Fort Donelson National Battlefield) can earn a free commemorative patch. You can learn more about this opportunity at [nps.gov/macal/learn/news/pentathlon.htm](http://nps.gov/macal/learn/news/pentathlon.htm).

### Great Smoky Mountains National Park (Gatlinburg; shared with North Carolina)

This popular destination, bordered by tourist draws Gatlinburg in Tennessee and Cherokee in North Carolina as well as several other gateway communities, boasts the highest annual visitation numbers of the nation’s 59 national parks at about 10 million visitors. And there is a lot to love about this park — stunning scenery, rich biodiversity, camping, picnicking, horseback-riding, fishing, hiking, so many subjects for nature photography and waterfalls galore. You can see many snapshots of the moun-

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tain life of yesteryear in the more than 90 historic homes, outbuildings, grist mills, barns, schools and churches throughout the park. The best places to see these buildings are Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Oconaluftee and along the Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail.

One of the park’s most popular annual events is the spring Wildflower Pilgrimage, set this year for April 21-25. The park will host walks, lectures, hikes and other programs showcasing the park’s flora and fauna. The Music of the Mountains Festival, filled with Appalachian-style music and other events, will be held at the Sugarlands Visitor Center in Gatlinburg as well as in Townsend and Cosby April 17-19.

For more information on the park, visit [nps.gov/grsm/index.htm](http://nps.gov/grsm/index.htm).

### Manhattan Project National Historical Park (Oak Ridge; shared with New Mexico and Washington)

One of the newest additions to the National Park Service, the Manhattan Project National Historical Park was established in November. This unit preserves the history of the making of the atomic bomb in World War II by tying together the stories of the Oak Ridge Reservation in Tennessee with those of facilities in Hanford, Washington, and Los Alamos, New Mexico.

Oak Ridge was the administrative and military headquarters for the secret Manhattan Project during World War II. More than 75,000 people lived and worked here during the days leading up to the building of the atomic bomb.

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*Cypress swamp at  
milepost 122 along  
the Natchez Trace*

As a newer NPS unit, one operated jointly with the Department of Energy, offerings are in the early stages. Currently, a bus tour of the Oak Ridge Reservation is included with the admission to the American Museum of Science and Energy from March through November. However, tour times vary by week, so be sure to check before your trip at [amse.org](http://amse.org) to verify that you plan to visit on a day when a tour is available.

## Natchez Trace Parkway (shared with Alabama and Mississippi)

This 444-mile scenic drive from Nashville to Natchez, Mississippi, meanders along the approximate location of the Old Natchez Trace, a forest path used for centuries by Native Americans, explorers, traders, hunters and emigrants. You can even walk along some of the original trail today, parts of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The route, which is also popular with bicyclists, takes travelers by historic buildings, scenic overlooks, Indian mounds, waterfalls and nature trails. You can also combine it with side trips to visit places of interest within a short drive of the trail such as the many beautiful antebellum homes in Natchez, Mississippi, the Elvis Presley Birthplace Museum in Tupelo, Mississippi, and Nashville's famous Loveless Café, located at the parkway's northern terminus.

Among the special events coming up soon are the BioBlitz on April 16 and Pioneer Day April 23. BioBlitz is a free event at the Trace's visitor center in Tupelo. Attendees will learn about the biodiversity along the Trace: black bears, bats, fish, wild mammals, snakes, birds and bees, and visitors will even be able to build birdhouses. Pio-

neer Day is a monthly event hosted by the park and the Tombigbee Pioneer Group, whose members demonstrate pioneer-era crafts and skills at the Tupelo visitor center. You'll be able to watch them spin, weave, craft baskets, work leather and make corn-husk dolls.

## Obed Wild and Scenic River (Wartburg)

The fact that the land along the Obed River wasn't suitable for farming ended up being a blessing for the future in that it was protected and appears today much as it did during the early years of the United States. Visitors benefit greatly from the pristine condition of the river, a favorite with kayakers, rafters and canoeists. Rapids along the 45 miles of river range from Class II to Class IV.

Other ways to spend your time at Obed River Wild and Scenic River are rock climbing, hiking, fishing, birdwatching and picnicking. For a longer visit, you can camp at some primitive tent sites at the Rock Creek Campground.

## Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (shared with Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina)

This historic trail combines auto and hiking portions to tell the story of the Revolutionary War Battle of Kings Mountain. You can use the commemorative motor route that is marked with the trail's logo or meander along 87 miles of pathways. There are publicly accessible Tennessee trail sections in Elizabethton, Bluff City, Roan Mountain, Hampton Creek Cove State Natural Area and the Cherokee National Forest.

As you travel along the trail, you'll learn more about the Overmountain Men, patriots who traveled from East Tennessee to fight at the Battle of Kings Mountain in South Carolina, where Kings Mountain National Military Park is today. The battle on Oct. 7, 1780, was an important victory for patriot militia over loyalist militia.

### Shiloh National Military Park (Shiloh; shared with Mississippi)

Shiloh National Military Park is another of those battlefields where today it's hard to imagine the carnage that once littered the bucolic setting. But where now there are a visitor center, driving tour, monuments and exhibits, there once raged a battle that would become the bloodiest in American history to that point. When the Union troops finally won the two-day battle of April 6-7, 1862, more than 23,000 casualties had been amassed, including more than 3,400 killed.

The Corinth Civil War Interpretive Center in nearby Corinth, Mississippi, is a part of the park. The center includes two films, and exhibits trace the history of Corinth from secession through Reconstruction.

"There is a wonderful park facility right here in people's backyard and has been since 1894, even before the National Park Service was established," says Chief Park Ranger Stacy Allen. "It's a good place to engage in thoughtful, meaningful reflection on American history and the growth of our nation."

Among the special events planned for this year at Shiloh is the battle anniversary commemoration on April 2. Activities will include living history groups taking visitors back to those days long ago, firing demonstrations, Civil War photography, lectures and field maneuvering displays on the battlefield. In addition, representatives from the U.S. Navy Ticonderoga-class destroyer USS Shiloh will be on hand to present information about the ship.

A monthly concert series will begin in May and go through September. First up is Music of the Civil War on May 28, and on Aug. 25 there will be a special Happy Birthday to the National Park Service concert.

### Stones River National Battlefield (Murfreesboro)

Another Civil War battle with a heavy toll that yielded a Union victory was

at Stones River — Dec. 31, 1862, through Jan. 3, 1863. When Union reinforcements arrived, it granted Gen. William Rosecrans the victory after days of an essential draw. In the end, there were 24,645 casualties, the highest percentage of any major battle during the war. This included more than 2,900 deaths. While this is a smaller number of killed than at Shiloh, there were fewer troops involved, thus the higher percentage.

Your day at Stones River should include a stop by the visitor center, a drive along the self-guided tour or taking part in a guided tour, a tour of the earthworks at Fortress Rosecrans, a visit to the national cemetery and perhaps a picnic in the designated area. At 9 a.m. on April 2, the park will host a bicycle tour of the park.

### Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area

The heritage area encompasses the entire state and brings together several different organizations to tell the whole story of the years before, during and after the Civil War, not just the battles. Leadership and support — as well as preservation and economic development opportunities — are provided for organizations, local governments and individuals for education and interpretation of what happened across Tennessee between 1860 and 1875. The heritage area also partners with the Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and Transportation to maintain the Tennessee Civil War Trails marker and signage program.

### Trail of Tears National Historic Trail (shared with eight other states)

The Trail of Tears National Historic Trail preserves the history of one of the saddest parts of America's past: the forcible removal of more than 15,000 Cherokee people from their native homes in Tennessee, Georgia and Alabama to Indian Territory, modern-day Oklahoma, in 1838-1839. The trail, marked with distinctive signs, is administered jointly by NPS and several state and local agencies, individuals and tribes. It travels more than 5,000 miles through North Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma. Tennessee has added two new driving tours to the trail in Chattanooga and elsewhere in Hamilton County.

The trail's NPS website, [www.nps.gov/trte](http://www.nps.gov/trte), includes an interactive map that shows all the various points of interest that you could travel in one long trip or during periodic shorter trips. ■

The National Park Service and the National Park Foundation, the official charity of America's National Parks, have partnered to create the Find Your Park website, which has lots of information about the various parks, what they offer and a list of centennial events. For more information, visit: [findyourpark.com/findnps.gov/fodo/index.htm](http://findyourpark.com/findnps.gov/fodo/index.htm) [tncivilwar.org](http://tncivilwar.org) [nps.gov/tecw/index.htm](http://nps.gov/tecw/index.htm)



Shiloh National Military Park

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# Eye Doctor Helps Tennessee Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again



**F**or many patients with macular degeneration and other vision-related conditions, the loss of central visual detail also signals the end to one of the last bastions of independence: driving.

A Lebanon optometrist, Dr. John Pino, is using miniaturized telescopes that are mounted in glasses to help people who have lost vision from macular degeneration and other eye conditions.

“Some of my patients consider me the last stop for people who have vision loss,” said Dr. Pino, one of only a few doctors in the world who specialize in fitting bioptic telescopes to help those who have lost vision due to macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, and other debilitating eye diseases.

Imagine a pair of glasses that can improve your vision enough to change your life. If you’re a low vision patient, you’ve probably not only imagined them, but have been searching for them. Bioptic telescopes may be the breakthrough in optical technology that will give you the independence you’ve been looking for. Patients with vision in the 20/200 range can many times be improved to 20/50 or better.

Macular degeneration is the leading cause of blindness and vision loss in people over 50. Despite this, most adults

are not familiar with the condition. As many as 25% of those over the age of 50 have some degree of macular degeneration. The macula is only one small part of the retina; however, it is the most sensitive and gives us sharp central vision. When it degenerates, macular degeneration leaves a blind spot right in the center of vision, making it difficult or impossible to recognize faces, read a book, or pass the driver’s vision test.

Nine out of 10 people who have macular degeneration have the dry form. New research suggests vitamins can help. The British medical journal *BMC Ophthalmology* recently reported that



*A scene as it might be viewed by a person with age-related macular degeneration.*

56% of patients treated with a high-dose combination of vitamins experienced improved vision after six months. TOZAL Comprehensive Eye Health Formula is now available by prescription from eye doctors.

While age is the most significant risk factor for developing the disease, heredity, smoking, cardiovascular disease, and high blood pressure have also been identified as risk factors. Macular degeneration accounts for 90% of new legal blindness in the U.S. While there is currently no cure, promising research is being done on many fronts. “My job is to figure out everything and anything possible to keep a person

functioning, especially driving,” says Dr. Pino.

When Elaine, 57, of Kingsport, TN, came to see Dr. Pino she wanted to keep her Tennessee driver’s license and was prescribed bioptic telescopic glasses to read signs and see traffic lights farther away. Dr. Pino also prescribed microscope glasses for reading newspapers and menus in restaurants.

As Elaine puts it, “My regular glasses didn’t help too much – it was like looking through a fog. These new telescopic glasses not only allow me to read signs from a farther distance, but make driving much easier. I’ve also used them to watch television so I don’t have to sit so close. I don’t know why I waited to do this; I should have come sooner.”

“Bioptic telescopes can cost over \$2,000,” said Dr. Pino, “especially if we build them with an automatic sunglass.”

“The major benefit of the bioptic telescope is that the lens automatically focuses on whatever you’re looking at,” said Dr. Pino. “It’s like a self-focusing camera, but much more precise.”

To learn more about bioptic telescopes or to schedule a consultation with Dr. Pino, give us a call at 1-855-405-8800. You can also visit our website at:

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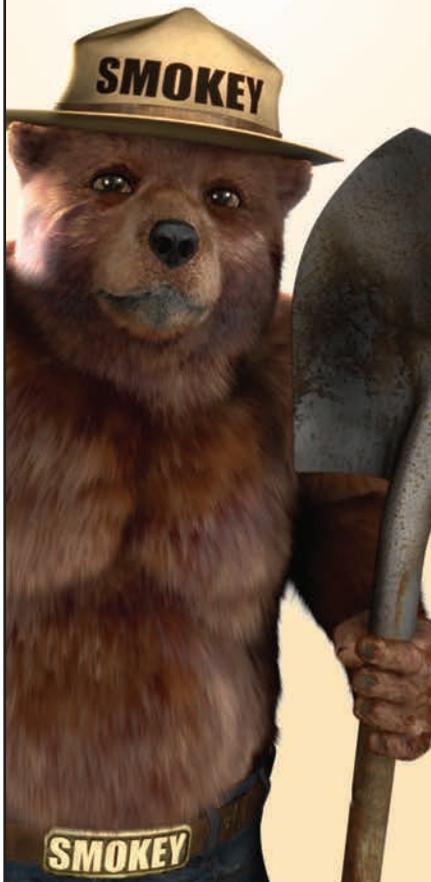
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## My Voice

*Nikia Hammonds-Blakely was only 16 when she had to face the music — breast cancer. Feeling alone with no one to talk to, young Nikia took to singing and songwriting. Years later, she would not only use her voice to empower others through motivational speeches and songs, but also share*

*it with the world by joining Susan G. Komen® to advocate on Capitol Hill for young women. It's people like Nikia who inspire us to continue leading the charge in advocacy to advance breast health and cancer care policy, so others can find their voice when they need it most.*

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# Critical connections behind the power

By Adam Schwartz

**M**onday, April 11, is National Lineman Appreciation Day, so it's appropriate that we take a moment to recognize the people who often work in brutal weather conditions to ensure we all have safe and reliable power. In fact, linemen are often first responders during storms and other catastrophic events, working to make the scene safe for other public safety officers. However, while linemen work in highly visible settings, there are many behind the scenes who also labor tirelessly to help keep the lights on. They do so with little or no public recognition or acknowledgement. While linemen can do their job out in the open — whether it is restoring power after a natural disaster, maintaining the lines or building new service — there is a lot more work taking place behind the scenes.

## *Promoting a culture of safety*

The Operations and Engineering Department ensures that the overall system is well maintained. This team is responsible for planning ahead for future needs and continually monitoring existing equipment and resources. Safety is an equally important area of focus. Working with electricity is an inherently dangerous task, and helping to foster a culture of safety for all workers is a major priority. Members can count on the Operations and Engineering Department to ensure they have access to everything from lighting to heating and cooling and so much more.

## *Calling for energy efficiency*

Member service representatives answer calls and questions about billing and energy use. They work with members to identify high-use periods and discuss ways to save on monthly bills. The Member Services Department is responsible for ensuring that you are treated appropriately, and it all starts at the

time you sign up for membership. This department is also responsible for the co-op's annual meeting and special outreach to community organizations, including schools, and communications such as the local news section of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

## *Delivering timely savings*

The Accounting and Finance Department is responsible for the financial well-being of your electric cooperative. It includes billing, collections and overseeing any loans the co-op has received. As you know, the co-op generates an electric bill that we send to you either electronically or through regular mail, often on a date that you have specified. We do so to ensure we can apply the latest technology, help lower your energy costs and send timely, accurate bills to you.

While your member-owned cooperative operates differently than investor-owned utilities, it is still a business. As such, the Accounting Department ensures that revenue collected from the membership exceeds expenses. Typical expenses include the money paid for electric power, equipment, new technology, upgrades to the infrastructure, employee salaries and other expenditures.

The Human Resources Department is responsible for all personnel associated with our co-op. This department handles recruiting, hiring, retirement arrangements, benefits and initial orientation as well as training for all employees. Continual learning and training for co-op employees are crucial to having a skilled workforce that helps keep the co-op operating at an optimal level. This learning element is also one of the Seven Cooperative Principles and extends to our members. For example, your electric cooperative sponsors youth leadership activities and an educational trip to Washington, D.C., as part of the co-op's Youth Tour program each summer.

## Staying in sync

Many different people and departments work closely together to serve you because you, the member, are at the heart of everything we do. Unlike other types of businesses, as a cooperative, our concern for community is one principle that sets us apart. From sponsoring local youth to supporting new jobs and industry through our economic development efforts, we stand as a driving force in our community. The electricity we provide literally powers our communities. And it takes every person in the co-op to deliver on this promise. Across the country, more than

900 electric co-ops, including your local electric cooperative, provide safe, reliable and technologically advanced service to 40 million Americans while maintaining a unique consumer-focused approach to business.

*Adam Schwartz is the founder of The Cooperative Way, a consulting firm that helps co-ops succeed. He is an author, speaker and member-owner of the CDS Consulting Co-op. You can follow him on Twitter — @adamcooperative — or email him at aschwartz@thecooperativeway.coop*

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# Take a break from technology

*By Meghaan Evans, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association*

**M**any complain that it is becoming more difficult to escape the pull of technology these days. As a society, we are becoming dependent on our devices for nearly everything we do. In fact, device dependence has become so severe, even leaders in the technology industry have started taking measures to wean themselves from their devices.

Have you ever read a line of a book — or an email or a work document — and a minute later, you can't remember it? Well, device dependence could be to blame. Your brain is like a muscle; after it is used, it needs time to recover. Without that time, it may not be able to “soak-up” and process the information it is receiving. Many of us go from one task to another, only taking a break to respond to a text, check Facebook or send a Tweet. But research has shown that using the time in between tasks to rest your brain can increase your cognitive abilities.

Device dependence isn't only detrimental to our cognitive development; it can also strain our relationships. Here are a few tips you and your family can use to keep device dependence at bay:

- The next time you finish a task, instead of getting online or checking your phone, take a walk in a quiet place, or simply sit back and let your mind wander (some call this daydreaming, and it is actually a great way to rest your brain throughout the day).

- Set up gadget-free zones throughout your home. It goes without saying that the dinner table should be one, but try creating a gadget-free zone in the bedroom or living room as well.
- Many of us use our devices to listen to music, read books or even take notes during meetings. Try turning your device on airplane mode when using it for those purposes. If you need Wi-Fi or a mobile connection to perform these tasks, disable all your push notifications so they don't distract you from the task at hand.
- You might be thinking there is no way you will be able to coax your kids to put down their devices. Here is a solution: Start a contest in your family to see who can go the longest without checking his or her phone or playing a video game. Make the prize a fun treat to incentivize them to win!
- When you are spending time with friends and family, put your device in another room so you are not tempted to check it if there is a lull in conversation.
- On family vacations, make it a rule that devices can only be used to check in with those who need to know how things are going. Stare up at the stars, not at your screens.

We all need time to unplug and give our brains a break. By unplugging, you may even save on your electric bill. And don't worry; Facebook will still be there when you return.

# How to be energy-efficient in humid climates

By Anne Prince, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**W**hy does a 95-degree day in one of the Southern states feel hotter than the same temperature in the West? Why do dry heat and humid heat feel so different, and how does this affect your strategy for home energy efficiency? While there are many common ways to achieve energy efficiency across all warmer climates, there are some important differences that vary by geography.

## Heat and humidity vs. dry heat

Generally speaking, when there is more moisture in the air, the temperature feels hotter than it actually is because moist air is closer to saturation than dry air. On a humid day, when the air is saturated with water, evaporation is much slower. Simply put, high humidity will make the air feel hotter while low humidity will make the temperature feel cooler.

## Heat reduction is priority No. 1

In warm climates, the majority of energy used to make the home feel comfortable is spent on home air conditioning and cooling. The first priority is heat reduction. However, in humid areas, moisture reduction is nearly as important as lowering the indoor air temperature. If a home has too much moisture, indoor air quality can be compromised, and mold and mildew problems can develop.

## Energy efficiency for hot and humid climates

The first line of energy defense is to ensure that your home is properly insulated and sealed in order to keep the heat and humidity that surround the house from getting inside. Leaky ducts, windows and doors can cause energy loss, making the HVAC system work much harder to wring the moisture out of the air and exacerbate potential indoor air quality issues. Homes that are “tightly sealed” are easier to keep cool and dry.

Next, make sure your HVAC system is the right size. The U.S. Department of Energy estimates that most current residential systems are oversized. If your unit is too big, you will pay higher energy bills, and you won’t get the efficiency level or comfort you want and expect. It is also likely that the unit is “short-cycling,” constantly turning off and on, never achieving optimum efficiency. When the unit runs in short bursts, it will not operate long enough to eliminate all the humidity in your home. Damp, cool indoor air creates a muggy atmosphere that can lead to the growth of mold and mildew. This can be a particular concern for those who

suffer from allergies because many allergens thrive in damp conditions.

If you are considering a new HVAC system, consult a member of the Tennessee Valley Authority’s Quality Contractor Network to help you choose equipment that is the correct size and that — like Energy Star-rated systems — meets or exceeds the SEER (seasonal energy efficiency ratio) rating for the capacity requirement.

## DIY humidity reduction

There are some basic steps you can take to lower the humidity in your home to help make it feel cooler and more comfortable. Start by reducing the humidity you are already producing. The kitchen and bathrooms are the biggest contributors to higher humidity levels. Check to ensure that your range hood is ducted to the outside, as recirculating range hoods are not effective in controlling moisture (or odors). When cooking, and especially when boiling water, run the vent fan. In the bathroom, run the vent fan when bathing or showering. Keep the fan on up to 30 minutes after you have finished in order to eliminate the residual moisture in the air.

If you can reduce the indoor humidity level, you may be able to maintain a comfortable indoor temperature with a higher thermostat setting and ceiling fans. The air movement from the ceiling fan will create a “wind chill” effect, making the temperature feel cooler and increasing comfort. Finally, check gutters and downspouts for leaks or blockages. If rainwater leaks out and saturates the ground surrounding your home, some of the moisture can eventually migrate into your house. If you would like more information about how to save energy, visit [www.2escore.com](http://www.2escore.com).

### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



*Earth Day is April 22. Give back to the environment by planting a deciduous tree near your home. Deciduous trees lose their leaves during the fall, allowing sunlight to warm your home. The extra shade during summer months will keep your home cooler and give your AC a much-needed break.*

# Products to avoid

By Tom Tate

**W**hen it comes to saving energy, caveat emptor is alive and well. We are all bombarded by claims that border on outright falsehoods, so it pays to cautiously view savings claims from third parties. Remember: If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.

Electric space heaters drain energy savings from your home if used incorrectly. Companies make elaborate claims about the amount of money you can save and charge exorbitant sums for their products. The advertisements frequently target those on fixed incomes, presenting false hope while extracting precious dollars from their customers. I have seen a number of these space heaters and admit they appear to be well made, but they typically offer no better economy than any other 1,500-watt electric heater. Bottom line: Electric space heaters should only be used to heat small spaces — not your entire home.

Black boxes that claim to clean up power, protect appliances and reduce energy use come and go. These often require an electrician to install and claim to improve power quality, smooth out power fluctuations and store energy so you can reduce your bills. Save your money. The concepts they present are already in use by your co-op and require utility-size equipment to deliver them. Something that can fit in a shoebox will deliver no value, at least not in the areas promised.

When you see the ad that reads, “The power companies don’t want you to know,” skip it. These are generally claims around building your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store or a motor that produces limitless “free” electricity. I would equate these with the emails I get from foreign countries telling me I can receive millions of dollars by simply sending all my banking information. At least in the case of the homemade renewables and limitless motor you get some cool plans and parts lists. You decide if it’s worth \$50 to \$200. I’ll pass.

There is a product that claims it will replace basement dehumidifiers and save tons of money. It basically is a fan system that vents all the basement air outside. Yes, dehumidifiers can be expensive to run and are a nuisance when you have to empty the water. Knowing that, I asked the Cooperative Research Network (an arm of the Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association) a few years ago if these products delivered on their savings claims. The experts



*Be wary of do-it-yourself solutions to build your own renewable energy source from parts easily obtained at the local hardware store. The old adage again rings true: “If it sounds too good to be true, it generally is.”*

said no. The problem is that when you blow all the basement air outside, it is replaced with conditioned air from other parts of the house, forcing your HVAC system to work harder and dramatically reducing the promised savings. Here’s my solution: I set my dehumidifier to 60 percent and run a hose to my floor drain. This resolves the water-emptying hassle and really reduces the power use while keeping my basement acceptably dry.

I will close with a warning that’s not technology-related: Scammers love to call or stop by your home, claiming they represent the local power company. Never give personal or financial information to anyone who claims to be an employee of your electric cooperative without confirming his or her identity. Ask for a call-back number from the caller, then check with your co-op. Ask the door-to-door person for a valid cooperative ID. If it’s really a co-op employee, he or she will be able to prove it.

Most of us want to save energy and keep our bills manageable. Technology can help do this, but be careful. Call your local electric cooperative before making any investments in technology that seem too good to be true. You’ll be glad you did.

*Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation’s 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*

# Think before pulling the plug

By John Pulley, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

**Y**ou may have seen a new marketing initiative by the propane industry that encourages homeowners to dump their electric water heaters in favor of units fueled by propane gas. The multimedia campaign, called “Pull the Plug on Electric Water Heaters,” makes its case with brochures, fliers, print advertisements, videos, radio spots, fact sheets, webinars, an e-book and even endorsements by a celebrity home-improvement expert. But make no mistake: The intent of the campaign is simply to sell a lot more propane.

Your local electric cooperative believes electricity is the smart energy choice. It is safe, reliable, clean, predictably priced and adaptable to many uses from the exotic to the mundane. Electricity powers everything from cars, cell phones and laptop computers to air conditioners, dishwashers, refrigerators, clothes washers and lighting fixtures. More than ever, America runs on electricity.

As your trusted energy adviser, your co-op wants to provide you with the facts you need to make the best decision.

Let’s look at the propane marketing campaign. Some of the claims challenge common sense and would be hard to prove, including assertions about efficiency, environmental impacts and cost. “With a propane water heater, you can use less energy, save money and reduce your carbon footprint,” proclaims Danny Lipford, host of the television program “Today’s Homeowner,” in a campaign video. “They really are that efficient.” Apparently Danny neglected to mention that propane is a fossil fuel.

The campaign also resorts to scare tactics. Installation of propane water heaters is often a laborious process that requires running propane lines and exhaust vents. Turning reality on its head, the pro-propane campaign

would have you believe that replacing an electric water heater “can take days longer, days you’ll spend taking icy-cold showers,” Lipford warns. Actually, in most cases, installing an electric heater is a snap.

Your local electric cooperative believes electric water heaters are the smart choice for many reasons:

- High-efficiency electric water heaters, including heat pumps, are readily available.
- Electric water heaters are safe. They produce no carbon monoxide, and they pose no threat of combustion or explosion.
- Electric water heaters can run on power generated from a range of energy sources, including solar, wind, hydro and other renewables.
- Electric heaters don’t lose energy from exhaust or the replacement air that circulates into and out of a house. Propane heaters require on-site storage tanks.
- Electric water heaters are easy to install. They require no expensive gas lines or exhaust flues.
- The cost of electricity is less volatile than it is for other fuels. The cost of propane tends to fluctuate wildly.

Touchstone Energy has produced three fact sheets on water heating choices, water heater efficiency, and hot water distribution that are part of the Home Efficiency Analysis Tool. To access these fact sheets, visit [homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com](http://homeefficiency.touchstoneenergy.com), enter information about your home and go to the “systems” tab for the water heater sheets.



# How to start saving energy and money

## Three quick tips toward energy efficiency

By Paul Wesslund

**C**elebrate Earth Day on Friday, April 22, by making your home more energy-efficient.

Below are three efficiency tips from energy expert Brian Sloboda of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association:

1. Look around your home for no-cost ways to be efficient. Close the curtains in the summer, and open them in the winter. Turn off your computers overnight. Also turn off video game consoles when they're not being used. Better yet, keep them off and send the kids outside to play baseball.
2. Look for small steps you can take, and do it yourself. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.
3. Call your local electric cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

**3 STEPS to ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

**1** Identify ways to save energy when using appliances and electronics in your home. Buy ENERGY STAR-rated appliances when possible, and turn off electronics such as computers and gaming consoles when not in use.

**2** DIY projects can help you save energy. Caulk around drafty windows, use LED bulbs and check insulation levels in your home.

**3** Check with your electric co-op about energy-saving programs.

3. Call your local electric cooperative about energy-saving programs. Your co-op may be able to offer advice, appliance rebates or a home energy checkup. You might be surprised to find out what's really driving up your energy costs.

*Paul Wesslund writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.*



# Don't TOY with your SAFETY

When you're playing outdoors, keep a safe distance from power lines, substations and other equipment your electric co-op uses to send electricity to your home.



Flying remote-controlled toys is a great way to have fun, but accidentally making contact with a power line or other electrical equipment can be dangerous and, in some cases, even deadly.

- Never fly kites or remote-controlled toys near power lines.
- Stay away from power lines, meters, transformers and electrical boxes.
- Never climb trees near power lines.
- If you get something stuck on a power line, call your electric co-op.
- Never touch or go near a downed power line.



AMERICA'S ELECTRIC  
COOPERATIVES

## What you can learn from a home energy audit

*Dear Pat: I keep hearing about home energy audits. How do they work, and will they save me money? — Lorena C.*

**D**ear Lorena: You are smart to be thinking about a home energy audit. Spending a few hundred dollars now can save you thousands of dollars over time.

A home energy audit is a detailed assessment of your home that can give you a roadmap for future energy-related investments. An energy audit can meet different needs:

- What efficiency investments will be most effective in reducing your energy bills?
- Are areas of your home sometimes too hot or too cold? An energy audit can identify problem areas and solutions.
- Are you considering a new furnace, air conditioner or rooftop solar system? An energy audit will help you “right-size” these systems and identify complementary measures that will help these large investments work most efficiently.
- Are you considering selling your home? An energy audit can document your home’s efficiency to help improve its resale value.

Online audit tools can give you a basic understanding of how your home compares to similar ones. However, a qualified and professional home energy auditor can use his or her experience and high-tech tools to provide a thorough report of your home’s challenges and opportunities. A professional energy audit can range from a quick, visual walk-through of the home to a more comprehensive, more informative but more expensive assessment.

Energy audits require an examination of the building envelope (attic, floor and exterior walls) and the energy systems in the home such as the water heater, air conditioner and furnace. Follow the auditor during the inspection and ask questions so you can understand where the problems are, what you can address yourself and where you may need further professional help. The auditor may analyze your recent energy bills to determine what your energy is used for and if use has recently changed. Finally, the auditor will ask about the energy use behaviors for those who live in the home. For example, is someone home all day, or does everyone leave for work and school?

Ford Tupper, an energy auditor with the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, noted, “The residents’ habits can make a big impact on the energy bill and can also be the hardest to change. If you go from being a household

with two working adults to one with a new baby and an adult home most of the day, your energy use is going to increase.”

An auditor may do some or all of these tests:

- **Blower-door test:** Windows are often the suspected cause for air leaks in the home, but there are usually larger and less obvious sources. A blower-door test measures how airtight your home is and identifies where the air leaks are.
- **Duct blaster:** Ducts move warm and cool air around your home. Duct-testing can measure whether your ducts are leaking.
- **Thermographic imaging:** Seth Rosser, an energy advisor at United Cooperative Services in Texas, shared, “Identifying where more insulation is needed is a key component in our energy audits — too little insulation will make a member use more energy than needed. Adding more can provide a quick return on investment.” Thermographic imaging is one way to identify where more insulation is needed. Infrared images show “cold” spots in a home’s envelope.

- **Health and safety testing:** Energy auditors are also trained to spot safety problems such as a missing smoke detector or an appliance that could cause carbon monoxide issues. Some auditors can also test your home for radon.

Following the assessment of your home, the auditor will analyze the information and make recommendations on what systems could be upgraded or behavior changes you can make to reduce energy use and improve comfort. If you take action based on your auditor’s recommendations, you could lower your energy bill 5 percent to 30 percent and perhaps even more!

Your electric co-op may be able to help you get started with your energy audit. Some co-ops even offer discounted audits or a list of qualified energy auditors in the area. Be sure that whoever you hire is willing to answer questions, and plan to be home during the audit — it is a great opportunity to learn what makes your home tick and how you can make it even better.

*This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Amy Wheelless of Collaborative Efficiency. For more information on ensuring quality energy-efficiency work, visit [www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips](http://www.collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips) or email Keegan at [energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com](mailto:energytips@collaborativeefficiency.com).*



*A blower-door test during a home energy audit can help identify sources of air leakage. Photo Credit: Tõnu Mauring*

# Mary Neely's story one of woe and survival

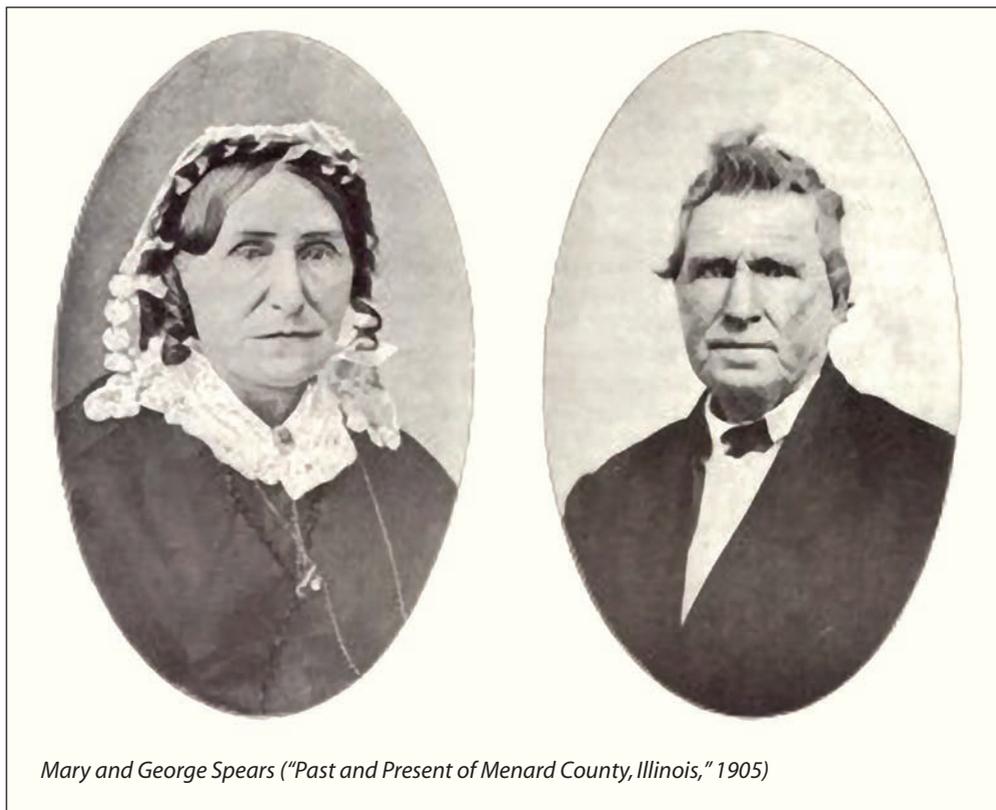
The more I read stories about the early history of Middle Tennessee, the more I am struck by how much some of the early settlers suffered.

One of the most dramatic examples is Mary Neely. In fact, I am beginning to think that Mary Neely may be one of the most overlooked people not only in Tennessee's history but in the history of the American frontier in general.

Mary Neely was the fourth of William and Margaret Neely's 10 children. Her father was born in Ireland and migrated west to South Carolina, then

East Tennessee and then Middle Tennessee at about the time of the Donelson Party migration. The Neely Party came down the French Broad and Tennessee rivers in canoes as far as the Muscle Shoals (in present-day northwest Alabama). They came the rest of the way along the Natchez Trace. Arriving in Middle Tennessee, they built a cabin in Mansker's settlement (present-day Goodlettsville.)

Before settlers came to Middle Tennessee, Dragging Canoe had warned that it would be a "dark and bloody land." During the 15 years of the settlement at French Lick, he and his warriors were true to his promise and attacked the settlers again and again. What I didn't realize until I learned Mary Neely's story is that the attacks weren't just coming from the south. There were also attacks coming from Shawnee warriors who lived north of Tennessee and were armed by the British during the American Revolution.



Mary and George Spears ("Past and Present of Menard County, Illinois," 1905)

In August 1780, William and Mary Neely were away from the fort when they were attacked by Shawnee warriors. According to the story Mary told many times throughout her life, three warriors "sprang upon him and cleft his head open with their tomahawks." Seeing her father murdered, Mary fainted. "When consciousness returned, two Indians were dragging me to their canoe."

Neely's captors took her down the Cumberland River until they eventually met up with a larger group of Shawnee. She then watched a council meeting where it was decided that instead of murdering her, they would give her the choice of becoming the wife of the man who had murdered her father or a servant to the chief. "I chose the servant's place," she said.

Neely was forced to travel with the group of Shawnee on a journey that took them through present-day Kentucky and across Indiana. For the first several weeks, she prayed and hoped that others would be coming to save

her. “All that long, weary march, when unperceived by the Indians, I would make marks on the trees to guide those who might pursue or would guide me if I should make my escape.” Eventually, she realized that there was no way anyone would be coming to rescue her. She gave up hope of escape, and her captors began giving her more freedom.

“After we reached the vicinity of the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, they became less watchful and allowed me to sleep unbound. I was a valuable servant. When I was captured, I had a few needles and did what sewing they required.”

Later, on that same journey northward, Neely fell sick with smallpox, as did almost everyone else in the group of Shawnee. “I was broken out all over; my body swelled to such an extent that I had to stand on my hands and knees, which were the only spots not covered with sores. I was blind for four days and without clothing except a cotton garment and a blanket.”

Later, in the spring, the group of travelers could not find food at times. “On one occasion, we were without food for 10 days, and all I had to eat was white oak bark. On the 10th day, they killed a bear. I cut about a pound of fat along the loins and devoured it raw.”

Somehow, Mary Neely survived.

Weeks became months, then years. Finally, at some point, Neely and her Shawnee captors visited Fort Detroit. (During the American Revolution, the British used Fort Detroit as a place to give arms and gunpowder to American Indian tribes to encourage them to attack American settlements to the southeast.) A Frenchman spotted Neely among the Shawnee and helped her escape from them by giving them whiskey, then stealing her away at night. A long search for her ensued, and Neely had to hide in a cellar for several days. The Shawnee eventually gave up and left.

Mary Neely was now a prisoner of the British (the American Revolution was still taking place), and it took some time to ensure her freedom. Finally she began the long journey home — on foot. “Winter had set in, and I struggled on afoot in a country where liberated prisoners were continually passing through, and the people were unable to do much for us,” she said. Mary eventually realized that making it all the way back to Tennessee was unrealistic. She found work as a domestic servant for a family named Spears.

It is now that the story becomes really amazing. You see, Mary Neely had a brother who was still

looking for her. On his many travels through Kentucky and Virginia, he would continuously ask people if they had ever seen a woman who met his sister’s description. “Finally he stopped on the Sabbath to feed his horse,” Mary recalled. “My brother inquired of a farmer if he knew of anyone who had been a prisoner with Indians. He said there was a girl at old man Spears’ who had come last winter.

“When he arrived at Mr. Spears’ home, I had gone to church. Then I came in, I passed by him and threw my bonnet and shawl on the bed. He raised his head, and I sprang into his arms crying, ‘My brother! My brother!’”

Mary Neely never returned to live in Middle Tennessee. She married a man who was a member of the Spears household. Outliving him, “Granny” Spears eventually became a well-known resident of Pike County, Illinois. People would come see her and consult with her about health-related matters since she had learned so much about natural methods while living among the Shawnee. People would also come just to talk to her and to hear her amazing story. Among them was a postmaster named Abraham Lincoln, who had many connections in that part of Illinois at that time. In fact, several accounts say that Lincoln was very fond of “Granny” Spears.

Mary Neely Spears died on Jan. 26, 1852. Today, a bend in the Tennessee River is named for her family, which suffered so much during the early days of the settlement of Middle Tennessee.

Want to read more? An author named P.M. Terrell has written a historical fictionalized account of Mary Neely Spears’ life called “Songbirds are Free.” ■



The graves of Mary Neely Spears and her husband, George Spears, in Menard County, Illinois. (Photo by Tara McClellan McAndrew)

## West Tennessee

**April 1-2 • Second Annual Blues Hog BBQ and Music Fest**, downtown Jackson. 731-616-7474

**April 2 • Lawn and Garden Expo 2016**, Brighton High School, Brighton. 901-476-0231 or tiptoncountymastergardeners.com

**April 7 • Savannah Gospel Spring Sing**, Hardin County High School, Savannah. 731-607-1948 or www.joshandashleyfranks.com

**April 9 • 18th Annual Dinner and Auction**, College Hill Center, Brownsville. 731-772-8378

**April 9 • Golden Circle Opry**, South Jackson Community Center, Jackson. 731-425-8614

**April 9 • Sardis Antique Farm and Home Show**, City Park, Sardis. 731-206-0858

**April 15-16 • 24th Annual Bunny Run**, Fairgrounds Park, Jackson. djackson1965@gmail.com or jacksonrodandcustomcarclub.com

**April 15-16 • Volunteer Plant Sale**, Lichterman Nature Center, Memphis. 901-636-2210

**April 16 • Fifth Annual O.F. Wagoner Tractor Show**, Stantonville Civic Center, Stantonville. 731-610-1282

**April 16 • 24th Annual Plant Sale Benefiting Fayette Cares Inc.**, First Citizens Bank, Oakland. 901-465-3802 or fayettecares.org

**April 16 • Art in the Village Spring Art Festival**, Casey Jones Village, Jackson. 731-616-8083

**April 23 • Yard Sale/Bake Sale**, Pickwick United Methodist Church, Counce. 731-438-3332

**April 23 • KYTN Country Music Festival**, Unity Park, South Fulton. 731-885-0051 or thunderboltradio.com

**April 28 • 10th Annual Fayette Cares Golf Extravaganza**, Fair Oaks Golf Club, Oakland. 901-465-3802 or fayettecares.org

**April 29-30 • Smoke Over the Park BBQ Cook Off**, Whiteville Civic Park, Whiteville. 731-254-0823 or smokeoverthepark.com

**April 15-17 • Trails and Trilliums**, Monteagle Sunday School Assembly grounds, Monteagle. 931-924-2980 or www.trailsandtrilliums.org

Trails and Trilliums is a three-day festival of guided hikes on trails in South Cumberland State Park, workshops, wildlife programs, live music, nature-themed arts and crafts vendors and food. Held on the historic Monteagle Sunday



School Assembly grounds, the event is a fundraiser for the Friends of South Cumberland, one of the leading land-preservation groups in the state.

**April 30 • Ninth Annual Good Hope Baptist Church BBQ Cookoff**, Good Hope Baptist Church, Adamsville. 731-632-0379

## Middle Tennessee

**March 28-April 3 • Mule Days**, Maury County Park, Columbia. 931-381-9557 or muleday.org

**March 31-April 2 • Smithville FCE Yard Sale**, Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Smithville. 615-597-5055

**March 31-April 2 • Watercolor Workshop**, Cumberland Art Society, Cookeville. 931-526-2424

**April 1-2 • “Snow White,”** Cookeville Performing Arts Theater, Cookeville. 931-303-7249 or pajch.org/theater

**April 1 and 15 • Millersville Bluegrass Show and Jam**, Millersville Community Center, Millersville. 615-429-6831 or millersvillebluegrass.com

**April 2 • USA Bassin Next Generation Bass Tournament**, Davis Corner Ramp, Old Hickory Lake, Mt. Juliet. 615-202-5367 or roger.brugger@tds.net

**April 2 • Quilt Show**, Matthews Memorial Methodist Church, Madison. 615-417-1879

**April 2 • Coffee County Dancing with the Stars**, Manchester Coffee County Conference Center, Manchester. 931-723-8283 or manchesterartscenter.com

**April 2 • United Way of Franklin County Father-Daughter Date Night**, First Cumberland Presbyterian Church, Winchester. 931-962-0103 or uwfc@att.net

**April 8-9, 15-16 and 22-24 • “Mark Twain Presents The Adventures of Tom Sawyer,”** Springhouse Worship and Arts Center, Smyrna. 615-852-8499 or www.ticketsnashville.com

**April 9 • USA Bassin Ranger Trail Bass Tournament**, Fate Sanders Marina, Percy Priest Lake, Smyrna. 615-305-3978 or sbd10490@gmail.com

**April 9 • 17th Annual Buttercup Festival**, Historic Downtown Nolensville. 615-283-8590 facebook.com/historicnolensvillebuttercupfestival/

**April 9 • Opening Celebration of “The 1930s: A Time of Bravery and Endurance,” 2016 Genealogy Festival and Upper Cumberland Wine Festival**, throughout Granville. 931-653-4151 or granvilletn.com

**Submit your events!**

Email submissions to [events@tnmagazine](mailto:events@tnmagazine) or visit [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org).

**April 9 • Cumberland Division Model Train Show and Tennessee Central Railway Museum Open House**, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-244-9001 or tcr.org

**April 9 • Vintage Chevrolet Club of America Automotive Swap Meet/Craft Fair**, Northfield School, Sparta. 931-761-8687

**April 9 • Perennial Plant Society of Middle Tennessee 2016 Plant Sale**, Tennessee State Fairgrounds, Nashville. ppsmt.org

**April 9 • Eighth Annual Community Health Fair**, St. John Lutheran Church, Burns. 615-446-2332 or blessedbythelord.org

**April 9 • Adventures in Agriculture**, Lane Agri-Park, Murfreesboro. 615-944-2060 or aiarutherford@gmail.com

**April 9 • Baker Mountain Farm Annual Spring Egg Hunt and Craft Fair**, 351 Pioneer Lane, Spencer. 931-316-9072 or bakermountainfarm.com

**April 9 • Brothers of the Wheel Motorcycle Ride**, downtown Winchester. 931-308-8010

**April 9 • Fifth Annual Pack the Park**, John L. Sanders Park, Decherd. 931-308-6977 or 931-691-4604

**April 9 • 14th Regional Shelbyville Postcard and Paper Memorabilia Show**, Fly Arts Center, Shelbyville. 931-684-8359

**April 9 • Coldwater Autism Awareness Ministry BBQ**, Lincoln County Fairgrounds, Fayetteville. 931-993-3465

**April 9 • Cheatham County Kids Inc. Second Annual Autism Awareness Event**, Sycamore Hight School, Pleasant View. 615-426-7820

**April 12-16 • 29th High on the Hog Festival**, downtown Winchester. 931-308-8010 or www.highonthehogfestival.com

**April 15-17 • Trails and Trilliums**, Monteagle Sunday School Assembly grounds, Monteagle. 931-924-2980 or trailsandtrilliums.org

**April 16 • 15th Annual Kars 4 Kids Car, Truck and Motorcycle Show**, Tennessee Baptist Children's Home, Brentwood. 615-642-5822 or kars4kidsnashville.com

**April 16 • Spring Mile-Long Yard Sale Excursion Train to Watertown**, Tennessee Central Railway Museum, Nashville. 615-244-9001 or tcr.org

**April 16 • Nashville Free to Breathe 5K Run/Walk and 1-Mile Walk**, Shelby Bottom Park, Nashville. freetobreathe.org/nashville

**April 16 • Manchester's Spring Bling Craft Show**, Manchester Coffee County Conference Center Holiday Inn Express, Manchester. 931-273-4158 or feliceck@k12mcs.net

**April 16 • Walking for Cancer Horse Show**, Tennessee Walking Horse National Celebration Grounds, Shelbyville. 931-703-7257 or bedfordcancerfoundation

**April 16 • Good Time Cruisers Cruise In**, Liberty Square, Sparta. 931-212-7658

**April 16 • St. Johns Women's Group Fundraiser**, Lewisburg Recreation Center, Lewisburg. 931-993-8609

**April 16-17 • Nashville Exotic Pet Expo**, Tennessee State Fairgrounds, Nashville. tnexoticpetexpo.com

**April 22 • Darryl Worley in concert**, Palace Theatre, Crossville. 931-484-6133 or palacetheatre-crossville.com

**April 22 • Hammers and High Heels**, The Factory at Franklin. Franklin. 615-690-8090 or hfhwm.org

**April 22 • Line Dance Fun-Raising Party**, St. Pius X Marc Carr Auditorium, Nashville. 615-438-4437

**April 23 • The Church Ladies Vintage Fashion Show and Sale and Ladies Lunch**, throughout Granville. 931-653-4151 or granvilletn.com

**April 23 • Fifth Annual Plant Swap**, Lane Agri-Park Community Center, Murfreesboro. 615-898-7710

**April 23 • Seventh Annual Aaron Shafer Memorial Road Race and Town Hill Bicycle Shop Time Trial**, throughout Sparta. 931-209-7884

**April 28-30 • Rusted Magnolia Marketplace at Jubilee Hills**, 1560 Cornersville Highway, Lewisburg. 931-359-3863 or jubileehillsestate.com

**April 29 • Dixie Line Days Train Show**, downtown Wartrace. 931-698-6299 or dixieflyertrains.com

**April 29-30 • Stitch and Share Quilt Show**, White County Ag Building, Sparta. 931-935-5657 or stitchshowshare.com

**April 30 • Lynchburg's Spring in the Hollow**, downtown Lynchburg. 931-759-4111 or lynchburgtn.com

**April 30 • Quilts and More**, IBIS Building, Lynchburg. 931-759-4111 or lynchburgtn.com

**April 30 • Fourth Annual Kids Funfest and Safety Day**, McMinnville Civic Center, McMinnville. 931-507-2386

## *East Tennessee*

**April 9 • Fourth Annual Master Your Garden Expo**, Camp Jordan Arena, East Ridge. 423-855-6113 or mghc.org

**April 9 • Grand Ole Opry star John Conlee in concert**, Lenoir City High School, Lenoir City. 800-965-9324 or johnconlee.com

**April 9-11 • An American Memoir**, Cumberland Gap National Historical Park, Middlesboro, Ky. 606-248-2817

**April 14-16 • Annual Spring Book Sale**, Church Hill Public Library, Church Hill. 423-357-4591

**April 15-16 • The Nancy Louise Vintage Market**, 34212 State Route Highway 30, Pikeville. 423-448-9036 or 423-413-3778

**April 16 • Barter Theatre's "Lying in State"**, Heritage Hall Theatre, Mountain City. 423-727-7444 or heritagehalltheatre.org

**April 22-24 • 58th Annual Roan Mountain Spring Naturalists Rally**, Roan Mountain State Park, Roan Mountain. 423-772-0190 or friendsofroanmtn.org

**April 23 • Community Plant Exchange**, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org

**April 23 • Charlie Daniels Band**, Niswonger Performing Arts Center, Greeneville. 423-638-1679 or npacgreeneville.com

**April 23 • Spring Thyme in the Garden Festival**, Rose Center, Morristown. 423-312-8364 or rosecenter.org

**April 23 • Powell River Kayak and Canoe Regatta**, Well Being Conference Center, Tazewell. facebook.com/powellriverregatta

**April 29 • Sheep Shearing Day**, Museum of Appalachia, Clinton. 865-494-7680 or museumofappalachia.org

**April 30 • "Broadway Comes to Greeneville"**, Niswonger Performing Arts Center, Greeneville. 423-638-1679 or npacgreeneville.com

**April 30-May 1 • Valleyfest**, downtown Dunlap. 423-949-7608 or valleyfestonline.com

**April 30-May 1 • Exchange Place Spring Garden Fair**, Exchange Place, Kingsport. 423-288-6071 or exchangeplace.info

# Strawberry Season

These recipes containing everyone's favorite berry will sweeten your day



*Easy Strawberry Freezer Jam*  
Photograph by Robin Conover • Recipes compiled by Tammy Algood

**S**trawberry time, anytime! Strawberry time in Tennessee lasts for only a few short weeks. We visit local farms as soon as warm spring sunshine turns our famous berries ruby red. These recipes will allow you to preserve a taste of spring long after the season has ended.

### **Chocolate Strawberry Shortcake**

Yield: 8 servings

2 cups all-purpose flour  
¼ cup dark cocoa powder  
½ cup sugar  
2 teaspoons baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
½ teaspoon salt  
2 ounces dark chocolate candy bar, finely chopped  
9 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided  
¾ cup heavy cream  
2 tablespoons raw sugar  
1 quart strawberries, cored and sliced  
Whipped cream

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Line a cookie sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

In a mixing bowl, combine the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Stir in the chopped chocolate. With a pastry cutter or 2 forks, cut in 8 tablespoons of the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in the cream. With a large spoon, plop 8 mounds of dough onto the prepared pan. Melt the remaining butter and brush over the tops. Sprinkle the raw sugar over each mound. Bake 12-14 minutes or until a tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool slightly on a wire rack, then split and serve with fresh strawberries and whipped cream.

### **Homemade Strawberry Popsicles**

Yield: 12 servings

1 cup whole strawberries, capped and hulled  
2 cups orange juice  
½ cup strawberry yogurt

Place the strawberries, juice and yogurt in a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth. Spoon into 12 (3-ounce) plastic popsicle molds and in-

sert sticks. Freeze at least 8 hours before serving.

Note: If you don't have popsicle molds, evenly distribute the mixture into paper-lined muffin cups. Freeze and after 30 minutes, insert a wooden craft stick in the center of each. Freeze 8 hours and peel off the paper liner before serving.

### **Easy Strawberry Freezer Jam**

Yield: 5 cups

6 cups fresh strawberries, capped, hulled and chopped  
1½ cups sugar  
1 (1.59-ounce) envelope freezer jam pectin

Place the strawberries in a large mixing bowl and stir in the sugar. Let stand 15 minutes. Gradually stir in the pectin, stirring constantly for 3 minutes. Let stand 30 minutes. Spoon into 5 (8-ounce) canning jars, leaving ½-inch headspace. Cover with the flat lid and screwband and freeze. Thaw in the refrigerator when ready to use.

### **Strawberry Cheesecake Refrigerator Pie**

Yield: 8 servings

1½ cups graham cracker crumbs  
¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided  
4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted  
2 cups sliced strawberries, divided  
1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened  
½ teaspoon pure almond extract  
1 (8-ounce) container frozen whipped topping, thawed  
Whole strawberries for garnish

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Combine the graham cracker crumbs and ¼ cup of the sugar in a medium bowl. Stir in the melted butter. Transfer to a pie plate and firmly mash on the bottom and up the sides of the dish. Bake 8 minutes. Cool completely on a wire rack.

Place 1½ cups of the sliced strawberries in a shallow bowl and mash with a potato masher. Sprinkle with the remaining sugar, mix and set aside.

Beat the cream cheese and extract in a mixing bowl until smooth. Add the mashed strawberries and mix well. Fold in the remaining sliced berries and whipped topping. Spoon evenly into the cooled crust. Refrigerate at least 8 hours or overnight before slicing and serving cold with whole strawberries.

### **Strawberry Pie Filling or Topping**

Yield: Enough for one 9-inch pie

1 cup mashed strawberries  
¾ cup water  
¾ cup sugar  
3 tablespoons cornstarch  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
¼ teaspoon salt  
4 cups halved strawberries (leave whole if berries are small)

Place the mashed strawberries and water in a saucepan and put over medium-high heat. Bring to boil and simmer for 3 minutes. Pressing through a fine-meshed sieve, strain the juice and discard the remaining pulp. Add enough water to make 1 cup of juice.

Add the juice, sugar, cornstarch, lemon juice, and salt to the saucepan and return to medium-high heat. Stir constantly and bring to a boil. Continue to stir until thick, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes. Stir in the remaining strawberries and use as desired.

### **Mini Strawberry Sandwich Cakes**

Yield: 12 sandwich cakes

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened  
½ cup sugar  
2 eggs  
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract  
1 cup all-purpose flour  
1½ teaspoons baking powder  
1 tablespoon boiling water  
2 cups freshly whipped cream, divided  
10 large fresh strawberries, hulled and capped  
6 sprigs fresh mint, chopped

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Line the base of each cup in a 12-

*Continued on page 34*

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## Taste of Tennessee

Continued from page 33

muffin pan with nonstick baking parchment and butter the sides. In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter and sugar 2 minutes. Add the eggs one at a time and add the extract. In a small bowl, combine the flour and baking powder. Stir into the butter mixture and add the water.

With a small scoop, evenly divide the mixture among the 12 muffin cups. Bake 10-12 minutes or until the cakes feel springy to the touch. Cool on a wire rack before removing from the tin.

Meanwhile, place half of the whipped cream in a pastry bag. Place the remaining cream in a mixing bowl and add three-fourths of the strawberries and mint. Mix well.

To assemble: Slice the cakes in half horizontally and set aside the tops. Spread the strawberry cream liberally on each of the remaining slices. Replace the tops and pipe a rosette of cream on top of each cake. Top with the remaining strawberries

and mint. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

### Sparkling Strawberry Basil Lemonade

Yield: 4 servings  
3 tablespoons sugar  
25 fresh strawberries, capped  
6 lemons  
25 lemon basil leaves  
24 ounces club soda



Place 3 tablespoons of water in a microwave-safe bowl and stir in the sugar. Microwave on high power until the mixture just comes to a boil, around 1 minute.

Set aside to cool.

Meanwhile, place the strawberries in a blender along with the juice of 2 lemons and 3 tablespoons of water. Puree until smooth.

In a large jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the juice of the remaining lemons, 21 of the lemon basil leaves and 4 ice cubes. Shake well 30 seconds and strain into the strawberry puree. Add the cooled sugar water and pulse to combine.

Fill 4 large glasses with ice and add a quarter of the strawberry mix-

### Watch us on the Web



#### Strawberry School

Check out our latest video at [www.tn-magazine.org](http://www.tn-magazine.org) and find out how to get the most and best from delicate, delicious and nutritious Tennessee strawberries.

One cup of fresh strawberries contains only 55 calories and is loaded with vitamin C plus folic acid, potassium and dietary fiber. A pint basket holds a bit over 3 cups of whole fruit. This same amount is the equivalent of just over 2 cups of sliced fruit or 1½ cups of strawberry puree. Depending on the size of the berries, a pint will



hold between 12 and 25 berries.

Remember, when canning and freezing your Tennessee strawberries, use only jars or containers approved for home preservation. That means don't use old commercial pickle jars or mayonnaise jars! Instead, use canning jars with two-piece lids or hard

plastic containers that are designed specifically for the freezer. Follow recipes closely; headspace is key to allow for expansion of your preserved strawberry concoction in a water bath canner or freezer.

Questions? Suggestions? Let us hear from you. Send an email to [food@tnmagazine.org](mailto:food@tnmagazine.org).

ture to each glass. Stir in the club soda and garnish each with the remaining lemon basil leaves. Serve immediately.

### Strawberry Buttermilk Soup

Yield: 4-5 servings  
 2 pints fresh strawberries, capped  
 3/4 cup buttermilk  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 4 ice cubes



Slice 4 of the strawberries for the garnish and set aside. Place the remainder in a blender or food processor along with the buttermilk, sugar and ice. Puree until smooth. Transfer to chilled serving bowls and garnish with the reserved strawberry slices. Serve immediately.

### Warm Lemon Curd with Strawberries

Yield: 4 servings  
 4 eggs  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 5 tablespoons lemon juice  
 1/4 cup honey  
 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon zest  
 Pinch of salt

6 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut in pieces  
 1 pint fresh strawberries, capped and halved or quartered

In a heavy saucepan over low heat, whisk together the eggs, sugar, juice, honey, zest and salt. Bring to a simmer, stirring constantly. Add the butter and continue cooking and stirring until the mixture is thick enough to coat the back of a wooden spoon, around 5 minutes. Place the strawberries in serving bowls. Drizzle the warm curd evenly over the berries and serve immediately.

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*Pick Tennessee spokesperson Tammy Algood develops recipes for The Tennessee Magazine featuring fresh Tennessee food products. Pick Tennessee Products is a promotion of the Tennessee Department of Agriculture developed to help consumers recognize and choose foods grown or processed in Tennessee. To learn more about our state's food products and find more recipes, go to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture Market Development website at [www.PickTnProducts.org](http://www.PickTnProducts.org) or contact Algood at 615-837-5160 or [tammy.algood@tn.gov](mailto:tammy.algood@tn.gov).*



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# Find the Tennessee flag

**W**e have hidden somewhere in this magazine the icon from the Tennessee flag like the one pictured here. It could be larger or smaller than this, and it could be in black and white or any color. If you find it, send us a postcard or email us with the page number where it's located. Include your name, address, phone number and electric cooperative. One entry per person. Three winners will be chosen from a random drawing, and each will receive \$20.

Note that the icon we hide will not be on an actual flag or historical marker, will not appear on pages 20-26 and will not be placed in any ads. This month's flag will not appear on this page (that would just be too easy). Good luck!

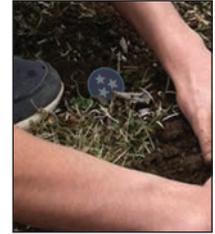
Send POSTCARDS ONLY (no phone calls, please) to: *The Tennessee Magazine*, Find the Flag, P.O. Box

100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Or email entries to [flag@tnelectric.org](mailto:flag@tnelectric.org). Entries must be postmarked by Monday, May 2. Winners will be published in the June issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

## February's Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found on the ground by the boy's feet on **page 14**.

Winners are drawn randomly from each month's entries. February's lucky flag spotters are:  
**Neal Gilliland**, Kenton, Gibson EMC  
**Sherry Johnson**, Fairview, Middle Tennessee EMC  
**Gereda Fletcher**, Winfield, Plateau EC



## Artist's Palette Assignment for April

**Artist's Palette for April** — You decide what to draw or paint. No more topics. It's up to you. Good luck!

**Three age categories:** 1 to 9, 10 to 14 and 15 to 18 years old. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners.

**Media:** Drawing or painting on 8½-by-11-inch **unlined** paper. We encourage the use of color.

**Entry:** Send your original art to: *The Tennessee Magazine*, Artist's Palette — **April**, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. (Please make sure you include the month on the outside of the envelope!)

**Deadline:** Art must be postmarked by Monday, May 2.

**Include:** Your name, age, address, phone number and electric cooperative. Leaving anything out will result in disqualification. Artwork will not be returned unless you include a self-addressed, stamped envelope with your submission. Each entry needs its own SASE, please.

Siblings must enter separately with their own envelopes.

**Attention, teachers:** You may send multiple entries in one envelope along with one SASE with sufficient postage.

**Winners** will be published in the June issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*. First place wins \$50, second place wins \$30 and third place wins \$20. Winners are eligible to enter again after three months. Winners will receive their checks, artwork and a certificate of placement within 30 days of publication.

## Call for Entries Poetry Contest

**A**re you a poet at heart? If so, we would like to see your efforts in *The Tennessee Magazine's* new monthly poetry contest. Please limit your poem to no more than 100 words. Your work must include a Tennessee theme. Winning poems will be printed in our June issue.

**Subject:** While the theme of your poem must include something Tennessee-related, including the word "Tennessee" is not required.

**Age categories:** The competition will include six age divisions — 8 and younger, 9-13, 14-18, 19-22, 23-64 and 65 and older. Each group will have first-, second- and third-place winners. First place wins \$50 and will be printed in the magazine, second place wins \$30 and third place wins \$20. Poems capturing first-, second- and third-place honors will be published online at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org).

**What to enter:** A poem of 100 words or fewer pertaining to the theme. One entry per person, and please give your entry a title.

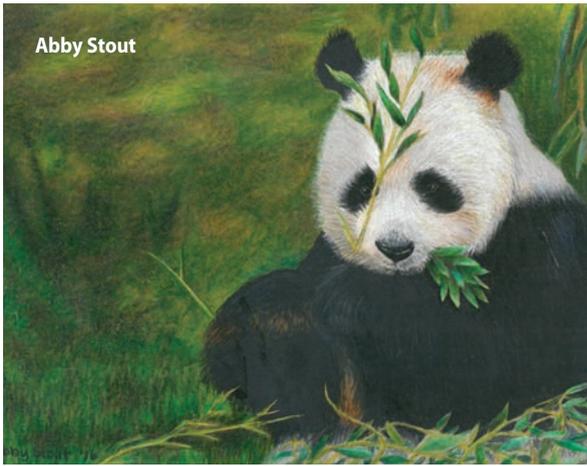
**Deadline:** Entry must be emailed or postmarked by Monday, April 25.

**Please note:** By entering, you give *The Tennessee Magazine* permission to publish your work via print, online and social media.

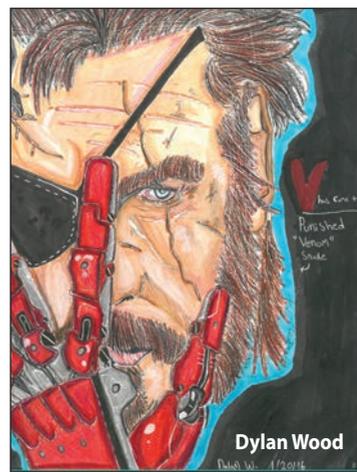
**Please enter online at [tnmagazine.org](http://tnmagazine.org) or mail handwritten entries to:** Poetry Contest, *The Tennessee Magazine*, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Please make sure to print your poem legibly. Please keep a copy of your poem as submissions received via mail will not be returned.

All entries must include the following information, or they will be disqualified: your name, age, mailing address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

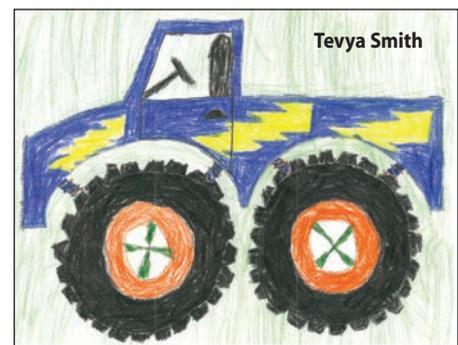
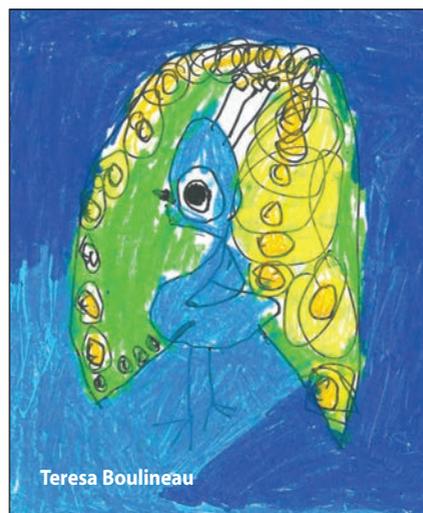
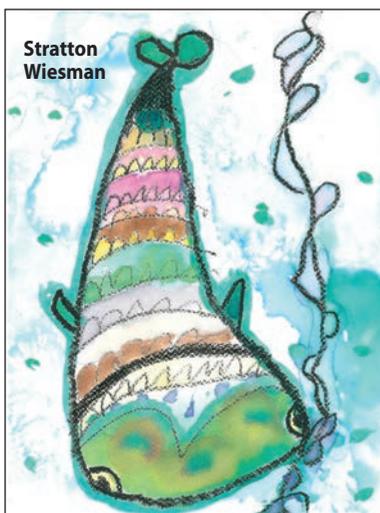
# Artist's Palette *February Winners*



**WINNERS, 15-18 AGE GROUP:** First place: Abby Stout, age 15, Duck River EMC; Second place: Anna Kurschner, age 17, Chickasaw EC; Third place: Darby Hall, age 15



**WINNERS, 10-14 AGE GROUP:** First place: Isaiah Kent, age 12, Duck River EMC; Second place: Madeline Zhang, age 13, Middle Tennessee EMC; Third place: Dylan Wood, age 14, Cumberland EMC



**WINNERS, 1-9 AGE GROUP:** First place: Stratton Wiesman, age 8, Duck River EMC; Second place: Teresa Boulineau, age 5, Middle Tennessee EMC; Third place: Tevya Smith, age 9, Meriwether Lewis EC

# Poet's Playground

## Age 8 and younger

### The Creation of Amazing Earth

by Rachel Keith, Middle Tennessee EMC

At first all was dark  
As black as birch bark.  
Then light came to be  
And God made something to show you  
and me!

God made the planets and stars  
He made the nebulas and the very red  
Mars.  
He went into the Earth and made plants  
and trees  
So we could see beautiful grass sway  
while we rested our knees!

God made the beasts and birds  
And all the sea creatures simply with  
words.  
He made man and woman  
So that they could spread nations with  
children!

Let us love this amazing universe,  
And we shall forbid any curse!

## Age 9 -13

### 5 Senses

by Samantha Rosencrants,  
Cumberland EMC

My five senses tell me we're in Tennessee.  
My! How much pleasure it brings!

My eyes see the bales of hay in the large,  
vast fields.

Like a lonely ship out at sea.

My nose, smells sweet apple pies, so  
sweet of an aroma, that  
you melt inside.

My ears, hear soft chirps in long grass  
down by the refreshing creek.

My tongue, tastes delectable, crunchy  
chicken that was deep fried from begin-  
ning to end.

My hands, touch the frost that covers the  
frost that covers the ground as if the grass  
was made of glass.

My! How much pleasure it brings!

## Age 14-18

### Tennessee

by Deepak Sundaramoorthy,  
Middle Tennessee EMC

Overture of rolling hills fills the air  
Chorus of maple, cedar, and oak ensemble

Blues of the street, sit-ins in Nashville's ear  
New voices, sprouting from where the past  
stumbled  
Uninterrupted, no mistakes, not one  
fumbles  
God listening to the tune Tennessee played  
A medley of history  
Carrying over chords of Old Hickory  
But Chickasaw beats lost in the rush  
Notes we've forgotten  
Notes we've forgotten Notes we've kept  
Making a song  
Of a state that's never slept

## Age 19-22

### Southern/Minded I

by Hunter Keough, Pickwick EC

Wishes — blades of grass,  
that tire swing when  
we were young. Do you remember  
all the hustle or the child  
you'd become? I can  
still taste all the honeysuckles  
sweat from where we rode.  
On bikes and on our dreams,  
oh how we drifted through the night  
as kindergarten wolves;  
eventually, some go  
alone.

I walk these byways  
lonely now —  
those wishes, they cut deep.  
I creep off into suburbs wrought  
from Nature's false antiques.  
But here I see a tire swing!  
There, honeysuckle paint  
gesturing like a long lost friend  
just one street down the road.

## Age 23-64

### Gray Soldiers

by George White, Duck River EMC

Sometimes you come up  
On them standing  
Like gray soldiers

In a briar thicket  
By a small stream  
Usually at the back  
Of a holler  
With no other trace of life around.

Others hide in fence rows,  
Peering into plowed fields, a  
Former forest first  
Cleared by crosscut saw,  
stumps pulled by mule  
To make way for  
Corn and a small yard for  
Kids now grown,  
And gone.

A stonemason's toil never dies,  
Even after the  
Stones are scattered.

One hundred years back,  
A young boy mixes mortar  
Listening to the  
tapping of  
The mason, a  
Stone being  
Shaped forever.

## Age 65 and older

### Smokey Mountain Message

by David Clement, Gibson EMC

As the flaming red fire of your limbs is  
fanned by the frosty wind  
the green prayers of summer give way to  
autumn's golden amen

With a fall burst of glory you proclaim,  
unashamed, the Creator  
lifting hallelujahs of color toward heaven

With each painted leaf you seem reluctant  
to part, but finally you shed them  
to share their message, broadcasting a ser-  
mon on the wind

And as your bare, empty arms wave a  
benediction, the separation will soon be  
forgotten  
for God will send another sermon as He  
outlines you in icy winter psalms of  
white

Congratulations to our winners. Be sure to visit our website,  
[ctnmagazine.org](http://ctnmagazine.org), to read more poetry from our runners-up.

See page 36 for details on how to enter *The Tennessee Magazine's*  
monthly poetry contest.

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Dear Connie,

I have had this blue dish for a long time. It was a wedding gift in 1961. Can you please give me some info about it?  
*Rita, Dowelltown*



Dear Rita,

Your 12-inch, blue, creamy glass, oval bowl was made by Fostoria Glass Company between 1959 and 1970. The pattern name is Heirloom and is sometimes described as ice blue. People will pay \$20 to \$95 for this bowl, depending on the sales venue.

Dear Mrs. Davenport,

This pie safe has been in our family for as long as I can remember. I'm sure it is over a hundred years old. Both sides, like the front doors, are also punched tin. It appears to be in excellent condition. Do you think it was made in Tennessee? I'm curious as to the value.  
*Margaret, Rogersville*

Dear Margaret,

Very often, to make a pie safe usable for multiple generations, changes are made. If I were looking at the piece, I'd examine the back to make sure all the pieces have the same degree of age. If the back of the gallery appears different, it may have been added.

Pie safes usually had simple pulls on the drawers like the round wooden pull on the door of yours. Glance inside the drawers for evidence of holes used to attach a simpler pull. The fruit pulls are

a bit fancy for a pie safe.

If you find the soft waves of a hand plane on the back, shelves and inside the drawer fronts, it's an earlier handmade safe. If there are rounded, fuzzier saw marks, the piece was made later, after 1850, with the help of steam. Regardless, your walnut pie safe would sell easily for \$500 to \$600. I can't determine the maker, but family records and history might help. The removal of the original finish reduced value by at least \$500.

Mrs. Davenport,

This little perfume bottle belonged to my mother-in-law. On the base,



there's a gold sticker that reads "West Germany." The bottle is very heavy, and the colors are vibrant and dark. The squeeze part is hard and deflated. How old is it, and what is its current value?

*Sandra, Spring Hill*

Dear Sandra,

The gold label attributing country of origin as West Germany confirms the crystal, iridescent bottle was made after World War II but before the wall was torn down. Similar bottles sell for \$20 to \$45.

Dear Mrs. Davenport,

My father bought this table for Mother in the '50s. It is mahogany and has the musical staff supported by the four legs running from the center out. The legs have metal tips. All of the tips and the wood are in good condition.

Originally there was a glass top. I would love to have your input as to its value.

*Gayle, Lewisburg*



Dear Gayle,

Your mother's table was made around the time your father give it to her. You're right: Lyre base tables can be pricey. Originals were more massive and intricately carved. The lyre as a functional and popular form for the base of tables and the backs of chairs enjoyed a revival of interest after World War I. Tables similar to yours are selling briskly for \$40 to \$75 because people are buying them to paint.

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### Mailing address:

Connie Sue Davenport  
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Email: [treasures@conniesue.com](mailto:treasures@conniesue.com)

Connie Sue Davenport makes her living by appraising houses full of antiques for private clients and at appraisal events hosted by businesses and organizations. Her website, [ConnieSue.com](http://ConnieSue.com), describes these services.



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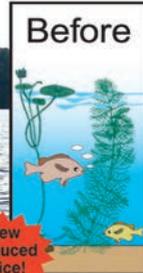
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# Point *of* View

By Robin Conover

*“Foothills Parkway Sunrise” by Robin Conover*

*Canon EOS 6D, 70-200 mm, 2.8 L-series lens,  
Gitzo tripod, ISO 100, f32 at 1/10 sec.*

In my humble opinion Ansel Adams would have loved digital photography and Photoshop. As one of the most important American photographers, he always pushed his equipment, darkroom techniques and vision to the nth degree to produce his masterful prints.

He is famously quoted as describing his process by saying, “The negative is the equivalent of the composer’s score and the print the performance.”

This concept is as true today as it was the day he said it — though the terminology may have changed a bit in our digital world. Ansel was talking about a multi-step process then just as we speak of workflow today.

His physical negative, most often glass, only came to life after it was painstakingly processed in a darkroom to reveal the latent image, which was then printed onto a piece of photographic paper via an enlarger. Each step bore his trademark specificity and love for the craft. He

utilized every tool available to create masterworks with pure whites and blacks and every tone of his zone system in between.

Today we talk about capturing images as raw files, importing them into a digital photo-editing software and outputting the final files to a myriad of devices. Each step of this process requires a skillset that can be a lifelong learning curve.

On occasion, I overhear comments at a gallery or a show that go something like this: “That’s not real; it must be photoshopped.” So, in the commenter’s mind, this particular photograph is worthless because of the computer’s role.

After taking a deep breath, my slightly irritated answer follows something like, “Yes, it is real, and, yes, it is photoshopped.” Then I try to provide a little education by describing my technique:

I explain that to create successful photographs, it all begins with strong compositions and great light. Then the raw file is brought to life with minimal processing in

Photoshop. The steps usually involve setting my black and white points for highlights and shadows, tweaking the color balance if needed, using a curve to set contrast and then sharpening the image. These steps reveal the subject’s details, tones and subtleties I saw with my eye when I photographed it.

Properly using the tools available to us today is both a blessing and a curse. I choose to use these tools to show the best example of what I actually saw. Some may take artistic license too far in this realm and rely on digital darkroom tools to attempt to make mediocre photos more successful.

There is no magic tool to fix bad compositions or uninteresting subjects. Interesting light and strong compositions will win out over poorly executed photos any day — no matter how much they are processed.

In the end, it’s really about the light and how you see the world.



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