

January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



Chickasaw Electric Cooperative

17970 Highway 64
Somerville, TN 38068

Phone: 901-465-3591

Toll-Free: 866-465-3591

Fax: 901-465-5392

Email: cec@chickasaw.coop

Website: Chickasaw.coop

24-hour emergency service:
901-465-3591

Office hours:
Monday-Friday
7 a.m. – 5 p.m.

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CEC PowerUp app

AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure, especially transmission lines and

access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at Chickasaw Electric Cooperative, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations with District 94 Rep. Ron Gant, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!



General Manager
John Collins,
Chickasaw Electric
Cooperative

Fiber project

Chickasaw Electric Cooperative entered into an agreement with Tennessee Tractor where CEC installed a fiber line from Galloway to the Tennessee Tractor facility on Highway 64. Installing the fiber lines will help Tennessee Tractor communicate with its other local stores in West Tennessee.



Chickasaw Payment Options



FREE PAYMENT OPTIONS

- **Bank Draft:** to set up bank draft, include a blank "voided" check with your payment, along with the authorization signature on the back of your bill. Your bill will be drafted approximately 5 (five) days before the due date.
- **Online bank payments:** Member sets up monthly payments through their bank. Payment will reach CEC electronically in 3 days.
- **By Mail:** Chickasaw Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 459, Somerville, TN 38068
- **Night Depository:** Located at drive-thru window at office (no cash please).
- **In Person:** Office Hours 7 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday,
17970 Highway 64 East, Somerville, TN 38068

• Banks:	Moscow
Somerville	The Bank of Fayette County*
BancorpSouth	Piperton
Trustmark National Bank*	The Bank of Fayette County*
Regions Bank	Hickory Withe
Oakland	The Bank of Fayette County*
Clayton Bank & Trust *	Trustmark National Bank
The Bank of Fayette County*	Collierville
Rossville	Trustmark National Bank*
Trustmark National Bank*	

*Only accepts payments from bank customers.
All non-customers will be charged \$3.

LOW COSTS PAYMENT OPTIONS

- **Auto Payment:** Customer sets up an online profile and chooses the time of month and maximum amount of their auto payment. These payments can be made by e-check or credit card, a \$3.00 fee does apply.
- **Credit Card/E-Check:** You may pay your bill online at Chickasaw.coop, by phone with the CEC service representative or our automated system. We accept Mastercard and Visa. The maximum payment accepted is \$450.00. There is a \$3.00 convenience fee for each transaction.

How to Contact Us

Our offices are open Monday through Friday
from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m.

By Phone:

For **power outages** after hours and during
regular office hours: (901) 465-3591
Fax: (901) 465-5392
Toll Free: (866) 465-3591

By Mail:

17970 Highway 64 East
P.O. Box 459
Somerville, TN 38068

By Email: info@chickasaw.coop



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Follow us on Instagram: chickasawecoop

Favorite in your web browser: Chickasaw.coop



CEC's Website



Outage Map



Report an outage

How to log into your account:

Enter your whole account number

Example: 12345001

Your password is your member number

Example: 12345

If you need assistance accessing your account
please call the office and talk to one of our
customer service representatives.



Happy New Year!

Chickasaw Electric Cooperative will be
closed on Monday, Jan. 2, so our employees
can celebrate New Year's Day with their
families. CEC personnel will be on call in the
event of an emergency.

Know what's below

Dial 811 before you dig

Underground utilities such as buried electric, gas and water lines can be a shovel thrust away from turning a project into a disaster. If you don't call to have them located and you damage facilities, you are potentially responsible for repair costs. In addition, you could be seriously injured.

Play it safe by dialing 811 to find out where utility lines run on your property. Your call will be routed to a local "one-call" center. Tell the operator where you're planning to dig and what type of work you will be doing, and affected local utilities will be notified.

In a few days, a locator will arrive to designate the approximate location of any underground lines, pipes and cables. These areas will be marked with flags or paint so you'll know what's below. Then the safe digging can begin.

Although many homeowners tackling do-it-yourself digging projects are aware of "call-before-you-dig" services, many don't take advantage of them. A national survey showed that only 50 percent of homeowners call to have their lines marked before starting their digging

projects, according to the Common Ground Alliance (CGA), a federally mandated group of underground utility and damage prevention industry professionals. CGA data also shows that an underground utility line is damaged every six minutes in the U.S. because people decided to dig without first dialing 811.

Even simple tasks like installing a new mailbox post can damage utility lines, which can disrupt service to an entire neighborhood, harm diggers and potentially result in fines and repair costs.

Calling 811 for a locate is something you should take seriously. We do. Chickasaw Electric Cooperative is also required to call before digging. Typically, we must allow three days for underground utilities to mark their facilities. In emergency situations, we are required to wait two hours before digging.

Never assume the location or depth of underground utility lines. There's no need: The 811 service is free, prevents the inconvenience of having utilities interrupted and can help you avoid serious injury. For more information about local services, visit www.call811.com.



Empty house? Leave the heat on anyway

Think twice before you shut the heat off in a vacation home or even your own home's attic or guest rooms. You might be trying to save money and conserve energy, but you could be setting yourself up for the wet mess caused by a burst plumbing pipe or sprinkler system.

When the water inside your pipes freezes, it puts great pressure on its container — including metal and plastic

pipes. When that happens, the pipes can leak or explode, causing flooding and plenty of property damage.

To keep your pipes from freezing, don't expose them to freezing temperatures. Keep the thermostat at 55 degrees or higher in all areas of your home. In parts of your house without heat, like exterior walls and attics, add insulation around pipes to keep them warm all winter long.

Four ways to waste energy this winter

What are the biggest mistakes homeowners make when it comes to energy use? Here are four major ones, according to Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories:

- 1. Buying big.** Many homes have furnaces and air conditioners that are way too big. Sales reps often try to sell big units because they cost more. But an oversized unit wastes energy and will cost you more in the long run on heating and cooling bills than a smaller one that is properly sized for your home and your family's lifestyle.
- 2. Overlooking leaks.** When you replace your heating and air-conditioning system, get your ducts checked for leaks. Even the most efficient, most expensive system won't perform at peak if heated or conditioned air is escaping through the ducts.
- 3. Under-insulating.** Heat rises, so it makes sense to insulate your home's attic. But it's equally important to insulate floors over a basement or crawl space as well as your

walls and windows. Conditioned air can leak out of your home from almost any uninsulated space.

- 4. Skipping fans.** Ceiling fans and portable fans can help circulate heated or conditioned air, which gives your home's HVAC system a break — and allows you to turn the thermostat down in the winter and up in the summer.

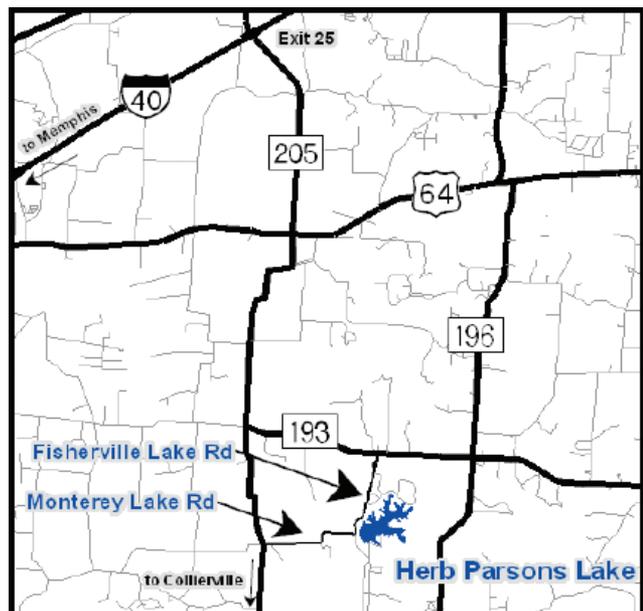


Local spotlight

Herb Parsons Lake is a reservoir in Fayette County near the town of Eads. Named after exhibition shooter Herb Parson, the lake is known primarily for its fishing, hiking and bicycle trails and wildlife. Herb Parsons Lake boasts several facilities such as a boat launching ramp, fish attractors, a handicapped-accessible fishing pier, bait and tackle store and rental boats.



Fish species that call the lake home include largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, redear sunfish and blue, channel and bullhead catfish.



2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!

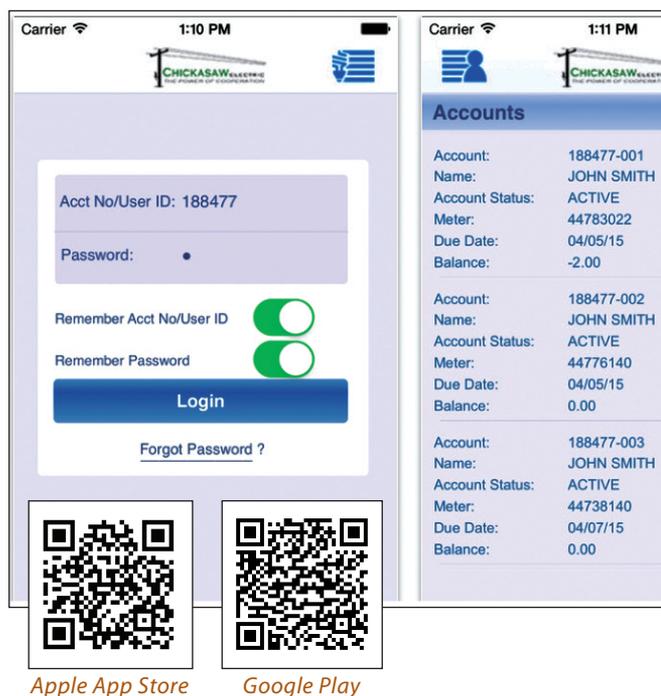
Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	JANUARY Turn off lights when you leave a room.	FEBRUARY Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.	MARCH Turn off water while brushing your teeth.
APRIL Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.	MAY Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.	JUNE Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.	
	JULY Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.	AUGUST Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.	SEPTEMBER Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.
OCTOBER Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.	NOVEMBER Take short showers instead of baths.	DECEMBER Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.	

Connect to CEC on your smart phone or tablet

Download our app today!

Chickasaw Electric Cooperative's app provides secure and easy one-touch access to view your bill, make payments, report outages, schedule alerts, sign up to receive push notifications and view real time outage information. Search for "CECPowerUP" or scan a QR code below to download the free app.



Apple App Store

Google Play

It's important that CEC records include correct phone numbers

Chickasaw Electric Cooperative is always trying to make sure that all the information on your account is correct. The phone number is the most critical. If your phone number is correct, CEC's phone system automatically recognizes your service address when you call to report an outage.

If we must schedule a planned outage in your area, the system will inform you of that without your having to enter a single prompt. If CEC is not yet aware of an outage, having the correct numbers on the account means you do not have to enter anything else to report an outage.

CEC also uses phone numbers to contact our members.

Correct phone numbers make it easier to report an outage and, in turn, confirm to CEC whether power has been restored while available crews are still in your area.

Reporting an outage involves two steps:



First, report it! We will not know if your lights are out unless you call.

Second, **request a call back!** If you requested a call back, the system will inform you that CEC has restored power to your area. If you receive the call and your lights did not come back on, you simply press 1 to inform

us while crews are still in your area that additional work is needed.

If you need to update your phone number, there are a number of ways to do so:

1. Visit us online at chickasaw.coop.
2. Use the *CECPowerUP* app.
3. When making a payment, mark the correction and return it to our Member Service Department.
4. Call our Member Service Department at 901-465-3591.

Having the correct phone number helps us better serve you!

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Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation

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Administrative Division Manager

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Terry Odom,
District Operations Supervisor
Gallatin office

Travis Akins,
District Operations Supervisor
Portland/White House offices

Todd Hesson,
District Operations Supervisor
Springfield office

Nicky Roberts,
District Operations Supervisor

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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*

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

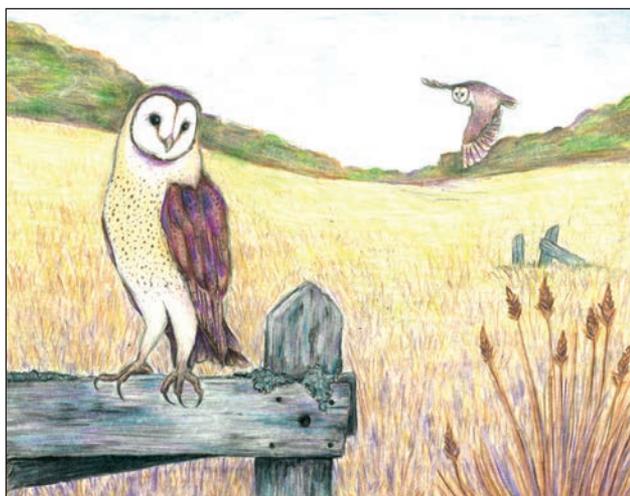
2018 calendar art contest

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation is calling on local student artists to submit entries for its annual calendar art contest. Winning entries will earn their creators cash prizes and be featured in CEMC's 2018 calendar, which will be displayed in homes, schools and businesses throughout the co-op's five-county service area.

The contest is open to all students — grades kindergarten through 12 — who reside within CEMC's service area. Entries will be accepted through participating schools and are due by Wednesday, Feb. 22. Each grade (for which the student is currently enrolled) has been assigned a calendar month to illustrate as follows: January, sixth grade; February, seventh; March, eighth; April, ninth; May, 10th; June, 11th; July, kindergarten; August, first; September, second; October, third; November, fourth; and December, fifth. Seniors will illustrate the cover.

Though there is no specific theme for the cover, rural scenes, barns, wildlife and items that illustrate CEMC's service (bucket trucks, utility poles, etc.) are a few suggestions.

Artwork will be judged on artistic merit, creativity and how well the assigned month is depicted. All elements of the artwork must be the work of the student submitting the entry. Artwork must be on white or light-colored, unruled



The artwork of White House High School student Eli Creasy is featured on the cover of CEMC's 2017 Eastern Region calendar.

paper no larger than 11 by 14 inches and no smaller than 8.5 by 11 inches.

Complete contest details and instructions are available at www.cemc.org or by contacting CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Stephanie Lobdell at 800-987-2362, ext. 1143, or via email at slobdell@cemc.org.

Stay aware to avoid scams

The world, it seems, never lacks for folks who want to separate you from your hard-earned money. And as means of information have gotten more sophisticated, so have thieves. With this in mind, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation would like to remind its members to be alert for scams that target utility consumers.

Scam artists, often posing as CEMC employees, are using various methods to approach individuals and businesses to demand payment on supposed past-due accounts. Most commonly, members have reported receiving unsolicited phone calls from individuals falsely claiming to be CEMC representatives. The scammers warn that CEMC will disconnect the member's electric service if the member fails to make a payment — usually within a short timeframe.

Scammers have even duplicated CEMC's Interactive Voice Response system, so when members call back a phone number provided by the scammer, it sounds like a legitimate CEMC phone number. Some of these criminals

also use caller ID spoofing to replicate CEMC's customer service number.

These red flags indicate scam activity:

- The thief becomes angry and tells the member his or her account is past-due and service will be disconnected if a large payment isn't made — usually within less than an hour.
- The thief instructs the member to purchase a prepaid debit or credit card — widely available at retail stores — then call him or her back to supposedly make a payment to CEMC.
- The scammer asks the member for the prepaid card's receipt number and PIN number, which grants instant access to the card's funds.

Please note that CEMC never contacts members demanding payment over the phone or in person, nor will we send emails asking for credit card information.

Members who have doubts about the legitimacy of a phone call or email should always contact CEMC directly at 1-800-987-2362, even if it appears the call or email is coming from CEMC.



PACK YOUR BAGS BECAUSE

900 WORDS CAN CHANGE EVERYTHING

TENNESSEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE CREATIVE WRITING AND SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

High school juniors can win a once-in-a-lifetime trip to our nation's capital, win thousands of dollars in scholarships and have a chance to network with other young leaders from across the nation. **It only takes 900 words.**

TENNESSEE WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR

TRAVEL RECOGNITION SCHOLARSHIPS CONNECTIONS

Presented by Tennessee's electric cooperatives
YOUTHTOUR.TNELECTRIC.ORG

2017 Washington Youth Tour contest

Each year, 12 high school juniors from Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation's service area have an incredible chance to spend a week in our nation's capital, getting a front-row view of government, leadership and public policy.

The Washington Youth Tour, sponsored by CEMC and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, provides young leaders with an opportunity to explore Washington, D.C., learn about government and cooperatives and develop their leadership skills.

Students are selected for the trip by writing winning short stories titled "Electric Cooperatives — Going Beyond the Wires" that explain how co-ops provide communities with much more than electric power. Stories must not exceed 900 words, including articles ("a," "an" and "the"), and the exact word count must be included on the cover page. Entries must be typewritten and double-spaced and will be judged on appropriate treatment of theme, knowledge of the subject, originality, creativity, grammar and composition.

The contest deadline is Wednesday, Feb. 22, and winners will be announced in April. Writers of the top 12 stories in CEMC's service area will join the 180-plus delegation from Tennessee and more than 1,400 representatives from across the country for the 2017 Washington Youth Tour June 9-15.

CEMC's Youth Tour delegates also have the opportunity compete for Tennessee's spot on the Youth Leadership Council to represent the state at the 2018 National Rural Electric Cooperative Association Annual Meeting.



CEMC's 2016 Washington Youth Tour delegates and chaperones pose for a picture in front of the White House.

Additionally, TECA will award scholarships of \$3,000, \$2,000 and \$1,000 for the state's top short stories. Winners of the TECA scholarships will be announced during the 2017 Washington Youth Tour.

"The Youth Tour is an incredible opportunity for these students to actually experience history up-close and personal," says Stephanie Lobdell, CEMC community relations coordinator. "Delegates experience a whirlwind of a week, visiting museums, monuments and other landmarks."

President Lyndon Johnson inspired the tour in 1957 when he encouraged electric cooperatives to send youngsters to the nation's capital. In the years since, more than 6,000 young Tennesseans have been delegates for the Washington Youth Tour.

"Our commitment to community is what sets cooperatives apart from other businesses," said Jim Coode, CEMC general manager. "The Washington Youth Tour is one way we show the youth of our service area that their co-op is more than their electricity provider. We genuinely care about the prosperity of our communities, and that includes providing special opportunities for these exceptional students and preparing them for future success."

The Washington Youth Tour Creative Writing and Scholarship Competition is open to high school juniors living in CEMC's five-county service area. Additional



2016 WYT delegates visit the grounds of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

details about the 2017 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest can be found on CEMC's website, www.cemc.org, or by contacting CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Stephanie Lobdell at 1-800-987-2362, ext. 1143, or slobdell@cemc.org.

Senior scholarship opportunities

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation will invest in future leaders by awarding scholarships to deserving high school seniors through its Senior Scholarship Program.

Twelve students will be chosen to receive one-time awards of \$1,000, which can be used toward their freshman year expenses such as tuition, textbooks, lab fees or other required classroom materials. The program is coordinated through each school's senior guidance counselor.

To be eligible, applicants must meet these requirements:

- Must be a graduating high school senior whose parents or guardians are members of CEMC and receive electric service from CEMC at his or her primary residence.
- Must have attained a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average.
- Must enroll or plan to enroll as a full-time student at an accredited Tennessee college, university or trade school

by fall 2017 (Murray State and Western Kentucky Universities are included).

- Must submit a completed application, including two letters of reference: one from a teacher or other school official and one from a community leader.
- Must write an original essay of at least 300 words explaining what the student most looks forward to about attending college and how a scholarship, in terms of financial assistance, will help in completing his or her education. All essays will be judged on the basis of content, composition, grammar and neatness.

Applications are available through the senior guidance counselors at each school and can be found on CEMC's website: www.cemc.org. Deadline for scholarship entry is Wednesday, Feb. 22. Children of CEMC, Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association or Tennessee Valley Authority employees, directors or attorneys are not eligible to apply.

Young members fuel community food drive

Throughout the month of October, Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation joined forces with local elementary schools to host its annual community food drive. Because of the efforts of the students, parents, teachers and communities involved, CEMC was able to donate thousands of nonperishable food items to help put food on the tables of those less fortunate this holiday season. All items collected were donated to local food banks for distribution.

“We are so grateful for the support we received during our food drive this year,” says CEMC Community Relations Coordinator Stephanie Lobdell. “Your generous donations will be a blessing to those who receive them.”

Participating elementary schools were East Robertson, West Cheatham, Clyde Riggs, Watt

Hardison, Cumberland Heights, Sango and North Stewart.



Watt Hardison Elementary



Cumberland Heights Elementary



East Robertson Elementary



Sango Elementary



Clyde Riggs Elementary

CEMC honors spelling superstars

Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation was a proud sponsor of the Cheatham County School System's annual District-Wide Spelling Bee held Nov. 21 and 22 at Cheatham County Middle School. Two competitions were held during the spelling bee — one for fourth-grade students and another for students in grades five

through eight. As a sponsor, CEMC provided cash prizes for students who placed first, second and third in each competition. Pictured here are the winners and participants from each competition. Congratulations to all on a job well done!



Fourth-grade students from Ashland City Elementary, East Cheatham Elementary, Kingston Springs Elementary, Pegram Elementary, Pleasant View Elementary and West Cheatham Elementary Schools participated in the annual spelling bee.



Fourth-grade spelling bee winners are, from left, Ava McGlone, Kingston Springs Elementary School, first place; Autumn Payne, Ashland City Elementary School, second place; and Sophie Haggard, Pleasant View Elementary School, third place.



Students in grades 5 through 8 from Cheatham Middle, Sycamore Middle and Harpeth Middle Schools took part in the district-wide spelling competition.



Taking top honors in the middle school competition are, from left, Alex Barnhill, Sycamore Middle School, first place; Savana McGlone, Harpeth Middle School, second place; and Dorothy Roach, Sycamore Middle School, third place.

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.cemc.org.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

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A Healthier New Year



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AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure,

especially transmission lines and access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at Caney Fork Electric Cooperative, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!



Bill Rogers
General Manager,
Caney Fork
Electric Cooperative

Clayton retires from Caney Fork Electric

By Angel Wood, CFEC Communications Coordinator

A familiar face behind the counter at Caney Fork Electric Cooperative's Spencer office, cashier/receptionist Brenda Clayton is retiring Jan. 2 after 20 years of service. Lesa Bouldin has been selected to succeed her.

Clayton began her two-decade career with CFEC as a temporary employee at the Sparta office in November 1996. The following year, she began working in the McMinnville office and was officially hired in June of 1997. She returned to the Sparta office in 1998 and in 2003 made her way to the Spencer office.

Clayton has lived in Spencer for 32 years where she has served as Van Buren County deputy trustee as well as county executive secretary. Born and raised in Valley Head, Alabama, to Henry and Geneva McElhaney, she has a twin sister and four other siblings. After graduating from Valley Head High School in 1972, Clayton moved to Chattanooga, attending Chattanooga State while also working at Blue Cross/Blue Shield, where she spent 13 years.

Devoted mother of Brittany and Megan, Clayton plans to spend more time with her daughters during her retirement years. When asked what she plans to do with all her extra time when she retires, she replied, "Since I love to read and relax on the beach, I will be doing much more of that. One of my daughters actually lives in Panama City Beach, Florida, so my other daughter and I will be



Brenda Clayton

visiting there frequently. I will be spending lots of my time next year cleaning and preparing to sell my home of almost 30 years."

We at Caney Fork Electric Cooperative bid Clayton a fond farewell as she takes the next step in her new journey. Our hopes are for her to have many more wonderful years with her beloved daughters as we know she truly adores them.

As Brenda's journey with the cooperative draws to an end, she closes our talk with these thoughts about working here: "I have truly

enjoyed my job here at the cooperative. It has allowed me to become financially stable while remaining close to home and close to family. I will really miss the members, the people I have worked for all these years. They have been patient with me and very respectful. They are absolutely some of the best people I know. Caney Fork has really been good to me, and it is a great place to work!"



CFEC celebrates the holidays with



Christmas Open House events



Does Rover need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.

A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.
- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make



them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
 - Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.
 - A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
 - Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
 - Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.
- Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.



Happy New Year!

Caney Fork Electric Cooperative will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2, so our employees can celebrate New Year's Day with their families. CFEC personnel will be on call in the event of an emergency.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire.

Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.

- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older.

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where

we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.caneyforkec.com.

Anne Prince 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.

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AS I SEE IT

Michael's Viewpoint

Reliability improved, but DREMC sets bar higher

The most important job we do at Duck River EMC is to keep the lights on. This goal is memorialized in our mission statement, and our employees are committed to it. But DREMC hasn't always been as reliable as today.

Back in 2001, the typical co-op member experienced four power interruptions per year. Maybe that doesn't sound like a lot, but those minutes and hours without electricity can add up and cause a lot of frustration. Reliability is how electric utilities are measured, after all.

Fast forward to 2016: The same DREMC members who experienced four service interruptions 15 years ago are today subject to fewer than two. Our goal is to further lower the time our members are without power by doubling down on the factors that brought us the 50 percent reliability improvement.

DREMC has taken a systematic approach to making the electric distribution system on which you depend stronger and more resilient. We have concentrated on several key areas:

1. Physical system upgrades — the replacement of old conductors, construction of new substations, addition of three-phase circuits and a consistent approach to fusing on taps and secondary lines — have gone a long way toward improving reliability. Back in early December when storms with wind gusts of more than 50 mph swept through, our most widespread power outage was caused by a vehicle accident. Another proactive approach to reliability has been building “tie-lines” to eliminate radial feeds. These connecting circuits allow us to back-feed areas when



Michael Watson
Duck River EMC
President/CEO

problems occur or we are performing maintenance.

2. System maintenance is DREMC's reliability numbers. We're inspecting poles on a regular basis, replacing those that have weakened or rotted.

Preventive maintenance along lines includes visual inspections and use of infrared cameras. Our substations — the hearts of

our system — are subject to rigorous testing and evaluation.

3. We identify “pockets” of poor reliability and set out to correct whatever problems are causing the outage problems. This might involve re-conductoring, installation of new protective equipment, right-of-way (ROW) clearing or a combination of these things.

4. An aggressive system-wide approach to ROW maintenance has proven to be crucial in reliability improvement. Trees and other vegetation growing into or toward lines contribute to power outages more than any other single factor. Keeping ROW clear and the system on a regular cycle of trimming and spraying is the best insurance we can provide.

5. Technology also has affected our reliability. Comparing our technological capacity today to 2001 is like contrasting the space shuttle with a propeller-driven biplane. They both fly, but that's about the only similarity. Our entire distribution system depends on computers and cutting-edge communications. From SCADA (supervisory control and data acquisition) and CVR (conservation voltage reduction) to distribution automation, we monitor, operate and

troubleshoot our system with technology. This is no longer a “dumb” network of lines and poles. More of our system can “sense” problems, predict possible outage effects and send commands to “heal” itself.

Last but not least, as DREMC members, you are blessed to be served by a dedicated and very professional workforce. Our surveys consistently show that you rank our employees as very competent, and you appreciate the work they do to keep

the lights on. Without them, all the foregoing reliability improvements would mean little. It is the human element that makes everything work.

DREMC is committed to further improving reliability. Our goal is to get those average annual outages to fewer than one per member. This is part of our quest to become the No. 1 electric cooperative in the nation.

You deserve no less.

DREMC sends aid to neighboring utilities

Crews from Duck River Electric Membership Corporation helped neighboring electric utilities restore service after severe storms and possible tornadoes in November left thousands of households and businesses in the dark.

Linemen and trucks from DREMC’s Sewanee Service Center and the Lewisburg District were dispatched to Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative service area, where high winds Nov. 29-30 caused system damage and numerous outages.

Tulahoma Utilities Board (TUB) also sustained damage from high-velocity winds. Many customers were without power. Crews from DREMC’s Manchester and Shelbyville districts were sent to provide mutual aid.

This is the second time in as many months that DREMC crews and equipment have been dispatched to assist after storms raked sister utilities and caused widespread power outages. Our linemen worked in Florida and South Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Matthew, which caused major utility system havoc in October.

“We cleared up our own storm damage early on Wednesday morning and got everyone back on,” explained DREMC President and CEO Michael Watson.

“Sequachee Valley and TUB are our neighbors, so naturally we wanted to help, just like they’ve aided us in the past. I am proud that our linemen were ready and willing to provide assistance in getting the lights back on for all the folks affected by the storms.”



Assisting Tulahoma Utilities Board were, from left, Robert Smartt, Matt Swan, Cody Pittman, Sean Scheller, Patrick Hunt and Tim Lusk.



Also responding in Tulahoma were, from left, Adam Stubblefield, Joel Doak, Heath Have and Chad Anderson.



Helping Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative were, from left, Keith Caneer, Charlie Jacks, Taylor Gentry, Rob Mason, Heath Fitzgerald, Adam Hoosier, David Ladner and Timmy Hopkins.

Manchester drive-through lanes

DREMC members find that the new Manchester office drive-through payment lane speeds things up on busy days. This photo provided by Manchester District Manager Michael Millraney shows lines of cars at both windows. Formerly, the line of vehicles often reached to the street. The new lane was constructed to relieve congestion and make it more convenient to use the drive-through.



CoBank and DREMC step up to help middle school

Mount Pleasant Middle School of the Visual and Performing Arts will soon have new custom stage curtains thanks to Duck River Electric Membership Corporation and

CoBank partnering with the Kids on Stage Foundation of Maury County.

For the fourth consecutive year, DREMC and its lender, CoBank, have jointly funded a “Sharing Success” grant to help a nonprofit organization with a project benefiting a local community. In the past, grants have been obtained for an animal shelter in Franklin County, the Books from Birth/Imagination Library program and the construction of an obstacle course at Henry Horton State Park.

This grant for \$10,000 will be combined with funds raised by Kids on Stage and donations from parents and school supporters to replace the original curtains at the

middle school’s special performance stage. The fabric of the curtains is rotting, torn and poses a risk for those using the stage.

“The goal of this grant program is to help leverage support for worthwhile community projects,” said DREMC President and CEO Michael Watson.

“The Mount Pleasant Middle School stage and auditorium is like nothing we’ve seen in southern Middle Tennessee. The school and community use these facilities extensively for performances, dramatics and shows.”

He added, “It would have been a shame to see activities curtailed

because the curtains were in danger of falling. Duck River is proud to be part of the team that found a way to address the problem.”

DREMC worked with the Kids on Stage Foundation to assess the need and develop a \$5,000 grant application for submission to CoBank. The electric co-op’s board of directors voted to match the CoBank grant amount.

“We are delighted to join with Duck River in support of such a worthy cause,” said CoBank CEO Robert Engel in announcing funding for the grant. “Concern for community is a long-standing cooperative principle.”

CoBank is a national cooperative bank serving vital industries across rural America. The bank provides loans, leases, export financing and other financial services to agribusinesses and rural power, water and communications providers in all 50 states.

DREMC, a member-owned and locally governed electric utility, serves more than 73,000 households, farms, businesses and industries in 16 counties of southern Middle Tennessee. DREMC also is a Touchstone Energy Cooperative, part of a national brand of 700 member-owned utilities across the nation.



Duck River EMC and its lender, CoBank, present a \$10,000 Sharing Success grant to Kids on Stage of Maury County for replacement of the stage curtains at Mount Pleasant Middle School of the Visual and Performing Arts. From left are Luke Gaines, CoBank; Sara Williams, Smelter Services cultural development and Kids on Stage leader; Cindy Pride, Kids on Stage coordinator; Anthony Kimbrough, DREMC board member; and Michael Watson, DREMC President and CEO.



Cindy Pride, Kids on Stage coordinator for Mount Pleasant Middle School of the Visual and Performing Arts, shows DREMC’s Michael Watson a tear in one of the stage curtains due to be replaced.

Clark retires with 44 years of service



Jeff Clark retired at the end of December after 44 years of service with the cooperative's Dechard District. A Franklin County native, Clark began his working career at the Winchester Hat Factory. In 1972, he was employed with DREMC as a part-time janitor and laborer and assumed the role of groundman in 1973. He held the position of foreman at the time of his retirement.

"I enjoyed coming to work every day and being with the boys," said Clark. "I just did what needed to be done around here." With 40-plus years of linework under his belt, he has worked his fair share of storms.

Clark said he is looking forward to spending time on his farm and "enjoying life."

DREMC's Watson elected to TECA trustee board

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation President and CEO Michael Watson has been elected to the board of trustees for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association (TECA). The announcement came at the organization's 75th annual meeting in Nashville in November.

"We congratulate him," said David Callis, TECA executive vice president and general manager. "We appreciate his service and are confident that Michael Watson will provide sound direction and represent Tennessee's electric cooperatives well."

Watson said he was honored to join the board:

"The Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association informs and protects co-op members. I am humbled to be a part of an organization that has such an important mission."

"Unified" was the theme of the 75th Annual TECA Meeting Nov. 20-22. More than 350 electric cooperative



Michael Watson

leaders and staffers from across the state attended the event, where they were reminded that they best serve consumer-owners when co-ops work together for a common purpose.

"Anniversaries present the unique opportunity to examine our past," said Callis. "The leaders who formed our co-ops and this association were visionaries. Their accomplishments merit our gratitude and celebration. TECA is using this

occasion as an opportunity to refine our focus and prepare the association to meet the challenges of the next 75 years through the leadership, advocacy and support we provide."

TECA provides legislative and communication support for Tennessee's 23 electric cooperatives and publishes *The Tennessee Magazine*, the state's most widely circulated periodical. Visit tnelectric.org or tnmagazine.org to learn more.

Juniors: Earn a memorable trip, scholarships for writing short stories

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation invites juniors in high schools across the cooperative's service area to participate in this year's Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest by best describing how electric cooperatives are "Going Beyond the Wires."

The prize for winning students is an unforgettable trip to Washington, D.C., where they will join hundreds of other students from across the country.

For years, DREMC has actively supported the Washington Youth Tour, which sends these students to the nation's capital.

"It is important to the long-term prosperity of the communities within our service area for the leaders of tomorrow to learn about the political process," said Connie Potts, DREMC consumer information specialist. "Youth Tour participants return to their hometowns stronger leaders, knowing they can make a difference."

DREMC's top winner will also have an opportunity to help pay for his or her college education if chosen to receive one of the \$3,000, \$2,000 or \$1,000 scholarship awards given by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association for the state's top-judged stories. There is also a chance to win a \$10,000 Youth Ambassador scholarship.

A DREMC representative is visiting local high schools to explain the program and encourage juniors to participate.

"The Washington Youth Tour gives our students not only an opportunity to see and feel how our government operates today but also a deep appreciation of where we have come from as a nation," said Potts.

To be eligible, students must be high school juniors whose households receive electricity from DREMC. They also must meet the guidelines established for the program.

For contest requirements, contact Potts at 931-680-5881 or cpotts@dremc.com.

DREMC employees earn honors from TVPPA



Mark Brothers



Marlene Cartwright



Joan Day



Janet Layne



Tim Lusk



Gabriela West

Six Duck River Electric Membership Corporation employees have been recognized for outstanding achievement by the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association (TVPPA).

At TVPPA's 2016 Customer Service and Communications Conference held Nov. 16-18 at Florence, Alabama, the organization's Education and Training Services recognized Mark Brothers, Marlene Cartwright and Tim Lusk as recipients of the Certified Power Supervisor (CPSv) certificate. Joan Day and Gabriela West were similarly recognized with the Certificate of Customer Service (CCS), and Janet Layne was recognized for having earned both certificates. The announcements were made before an audience of more than 100 of their peers.

The DREMC professionals earned the recognition by completing rigorous, comprehensive courses of study. TVPPA's CPSv curriculum focuses on how to reduce employee grievances, customer complaints, absenteeism, job-related accidents and turnover. The CCS program is designed to provide the professional skills and expertise necessary to not just meet but exceed the expectations of escalating customer requirements.

"Earning these certificates is an outstanding achievement by any standard," said TVPPA Director of Training John Cooke. "Duck River will, no doubt, benefit quickly and significantly as a result of the work their staff members did to earn this recognition."

DREMC President/CEO Michael Watson added his congratulations.

"Mark, Marlene, Tim, Joan, Gabriela and Janet are outstanding representatives of our utility," Watson said. "They play vital roles in helping us serve our members to the best of our ability every day, and their efforts are very much appreciated."

TVPPA is the nonprofit, regional service organization representing the interests of the 154 consumer-owned electric utilities that purchase wholesale power from the Tennessee Valley Authority and distribute it to 9 million consumers in Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Georgia, Virginia and North Carolina.

TVPPA's Education and Training Services maintains a comprehensive selection of utility-specific professional management and technical training programs for utility employees.

Sampson earns CCC certification through NRECA

Key Accounts Coordinator Teresa Sampson has become the third Member Services Department staffer in two years to achieve certification in electric cooperative communications and marketing.

She successfully completed the NRECA Certified Cooperative Communicator (CCC) program last month after submitting a portfolio of work, which was reviewed by an independent communications professional. In addition to the portfolio review, she passed a rigorous four-hour examination last month in Nashville.

"In meeting these requirements, Teresa has demonstrated that she is performing communications at a professional level and possesses a high degree of knowledge about the electric utility industry and the cooperative form of business," said Erin Campbell, chairperson of the CCC board of directors.



Teresa Sampson

NRECA's Certified Cooperative Communicator program began more than 30 years ago and now includes more than 200 cooperative communications professionals across America. This is the only certification that signifies standards of professionalism in communications and competency for the electric cooperative industry.

"To say the least, we are very proud of Teresa's accomplishment," said Member Services Director Steve Oden. "There are many ways in which skill in communications and marketing carries over to make a key accounts professional more effective."

Connie Potts and Claire Sellers also earned their CCC designations. Oden became a CCC more than 20 years ago and served as a portfolio judge for applicants seeking certification.

DREMC wins state communications awards

The second annual Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association Top Tenn Communications Awards were presented during the organization's 75th Annual Meeting last month in Nashville.

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation received an award of excellence for Best External Newsletter or Magazine Section. This was the second consecutive year that DREMC took top honors in this category. The judging was based on the effectiveness of using external publications to communicate with co-op members.

DREMC entered three issues of its local section in *The Tennessee Magazine*.

An award of merit went to DREMC in the Wild Card category for "80 Years Down the Line," a series of magazine articles about the co-op's 80th anniversary.



Connie Potts receives DREMC's Top Tenn award for Best External Newsletter or Magazine Section from TECA General Manager David Callis.

Other winners included Appalachian Electric Cooperative, Best Internal Newsletter; Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation, Best Website; and Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative, Best Use of Social Media.

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation and Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation also received awards of excellence in the Wild Card category, with Sequachee Valley and Appalachian earning Wild Card awards of merit.

"It is important for electric cooperative consumer-owners to be educated and informed," says Robin Conover, TECA's vice president of communications and editor of *The Tennessee Magazine*. "We honor these winners for telling the electric cooperative story in a professional way across multiple platforms."

Notice to Duck River Electric membership Corporation members receiving service from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016

To better comply with changes made by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service in its tax form required to be filed annually (IRS Form 990, available on the cooperative's website, www.dremc.com), Duck River Electric Membership Corporation has allocated as "capital credits" its margins or its excess of revenues over expenses and costs to accounts kept for each member for its fiscal year ending 6/30/16.

The allocations are based upon each member's "patronage" or business conducted with DREMC. The capital credit allocations do not represent amounts owed by DREMC and may not be used to pay or offset bills or other amounts owed to DREMC. DREMC is prohibited by the Tennessee Valley Authority from making any payment of such capital credits to any member. However, should at some point in time

DREMC be sold or dissolved, allocated capital credits may be paid and also used to determine what portion of the residual net proceeds (after the payment of all debts and obligations of DREMC), if any, each individual member would receive.

To determine the approximate amount of your capital credit allocation: (1) determine the amount of money you paid to DREMC for electric service between 7/1/15 and 6/30/16; (2) select the appropriate member revenue class percentage noted below; (3) multiply your amount paid DREMC by the appropriate percentage factor; (4) the result will be your approximate capital credit allocation.

For example, for a residential member of DREMC whose bills totaled \$1,500 for the period 7/1/15-6/30/16, the calculation would be $\$1,500 \times 0.8027\% = \12.04 allocated capital credit.

The percentages by rate class are as follows: Residential, 0.8027%; GSA1, 1.4802%; GSA2, 0.3944%; GSA3, 0.2696%; MSB, 0.35015%; MSD, 0.1118%; and Lighting, 1.1881%.

If you took service from DREMC in more than one member revenue class during the 7/1/15-6/30/16 period or during your service history with DREMC have migrated from one member revenue class to another, calculation of your allocation is more complex, and application of the above percentages may not fully, accurately determine your capital credit allocation. Members having questions or inquiries about their specific capital credits allocations should submit such in writing to Duck River Electric Membership Corporation, Attn: Capital Credits, P.O. Box 89, Shelbyville, TN 37162-0089.



Day Trips

By Claire Sellers

Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park in Manchester Provides Fun for the Whole Family

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation members live in what many people call the most picturesque part of Tennessee. The service area is full of unbeknownst marvels that you don't have to go far to find. Sometimes, beauty and uniqueness lie in your own backyard.

For Manchester and Coffee County residents, Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park provides historic and natural wonders worthy of a day or afternoon hike, picnic or relaxing contemplation. Old Stone Fort is a historic area dedicated to the preservation, protection and interpretation of the Old Stone Fort, a 2,000-year-old Indian ceremonial site.

"The park is nearly 800 acres and consists of mounds and earthen walls that combine with cliffs and rivers to form a hilltop enclosure," says Tennessee State Park Ranger Josh Waggener. "This enclosure is the main feature of the park and was believed to have served as a ceremonial gathering place for the Woodland Indians some 500 years before it was abandoned."

European settlers misnamed the area as a fort because they didn't know what the area had been used for.

The main trail follows the wall of the ancient enclosure. If you visit, pay attention because hikers can see the original entrance of the fort, designed to face the exact spot on the horizon where the sun rises during summer solstice. While following the enclosure trail, hikers can also enjoy the park's largest waterfalls, which include Step Falls, Blue Hole Falls and Big Falls.

"The 50-acre hilltop enclosure mound is one of the most significant prehistoric sites in the country," says Waggener. "This was intended to be a national park, but funding fell through due to World War II."

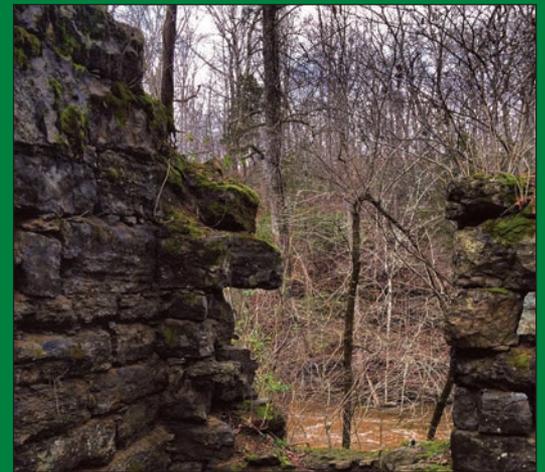
The park has 51 campsites with water and electrical hookups as well as a picnic area with 30 tables, grills, restrooms and a playground. Planned programs about Old Stone Fort, the Woodland Indians or the techniques of archaeology can be scheduled for groups.

A trip to the park isn't complete without a stop at the museum and gift shop.

On Jan. 1, Old Stone Fort hosts a Midnight Enclosure Hike, a 1.25-mile midnight hike with hot chocolate and an archeological lecture.

"I always enjoyed going to Old Stone Fort growing up," says DREMC Manchester District Manager Michael Millraney. "We would take school field trips to learn about the mounds and artifacts. It would be easy to enjoy a whole day at the park, and I encourage folks to take the time to do so."

Old Stone Fort State Archaeological Park is located at 732 Stone Fort Drive in Manchester. Call 931-723-5073 or visit tnstateparks.com/parks/about/old-stone-fort for more information.



Among the historic structures visitors can discover are the remnants of a 19th-century paper mill. — Photo provided



One of several beautiful waterfalls found on the Duck River as it flows through Old Stone Fort State Park. — Photo provided

During 2017, DREMC will feature backyard tourism in "DREMC Day Trips." This story is the first in the series.

Duck River Electric Membership Corporation



Bank draft is a convenient way to pay your bill. To enroll, members must provide DREMC a voided check and fill out a short form available at the DREMC office nearest you. For signing up, we will credit your electric account \$10. This is a one-time credit per account.

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Trenisa Anderson, Cashier

Jay Burress, Operating Line
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Johnny Biggs, Journeyman Lineman

Morgan Bowser, Apprentice
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AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure, especially transmission

lines and access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at Forked Deer

Electric Cooperative, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!



Jeff Newman
General Manager,
Forked Deer
Electric Cooperative

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.energyright.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

Does Rover really need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.

A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.
- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire.

Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.

- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older.

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where

we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

Virtual home-energy audits

By Tom Tate

Is your home using energy efficiently? Unless it was built quite recently to stringent energy-efficiency standards, there are bound to be areas of your home where you can improve efficiency, save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

In a perfect world, your best option is to hire a trained professional to conduct a full-blown, in-home energy audit. This usually involves a detailed inspection of your home's insulation levels, HVAC system, lighting, appliances and exterior space. A professional energy auditor will typically conduct a blower door test to check pressurization and spot hard-to-find leaks in the exterior. In addition, a professional may use a duct blaster to identify leaks in your home's ductwork.

One drawback to the in-home energy audit is finding a time that works with your busy schedule. An energy audit can take several hours when done correctly, which means you might have to take time off from work, farm out the pets, get help with the kids and their after-school activities — and so forth.

Luckily, there is a viable alternative: the online or “virtual” home energy audit. These tools have come a long way over the last 10 years. Today's online energy audits are user-friendly and take only a few minutes to complete. An online energy audit can provide an assessment of your home's energy efficiency and typically provides helpful tips on how to reduce energy waste. The audits utilize sophisticated computer models that typically use local housing types — factoring in the age, size, flooring and construction materials of the home — and local weather data.

I have used several of these audits and found that they typically come within a dollar or two of my actual energy bills when fed the correct information. Amazing! True, the audit won't provide a pressurization test of your home and ductwork, but it is a convenient start.

Here's where to look for online audits:

- Nearby utilities: They will include comparable weather and housing data, so the audit will be more precise.
- The Department of Energy: hes.lbl.gov/consumer

A word of caution: Be careful when using online energy audit software provided by organizations other



If you want to know how energy-efficient your home really is, an “in-person” home energy audit conducted by a certified professional is ideal. But if you can't find the time to hire a professional and schedule the appointment, consider a convenient online energy audit. Source: StockSnap

than utilities, government agencies or universities. Unfortunately, some companies may try to obtain information to sell their own products and services. If you see phrases like, “Learn what your power company does not want you to know,” or the site looks like a marketing page, I'd suggest moving on. Unless you are dealing with a local electric co-op or your trusted utility provider, give no personal information outside of your physical address (for data accuracy) or an email address for receiving a full report.

If an online energy audit doesn't interest you, fear not. The Department of Energy offers a do-it-yourself energy audit section on its website: energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-home-energy-audits.

The bottom line? Choose the energy audit that works for you, then implement as many of the recommendations as you can. Even taking small steps can add up to significant results, and you'll see the benefits in your utility bills for years to come.

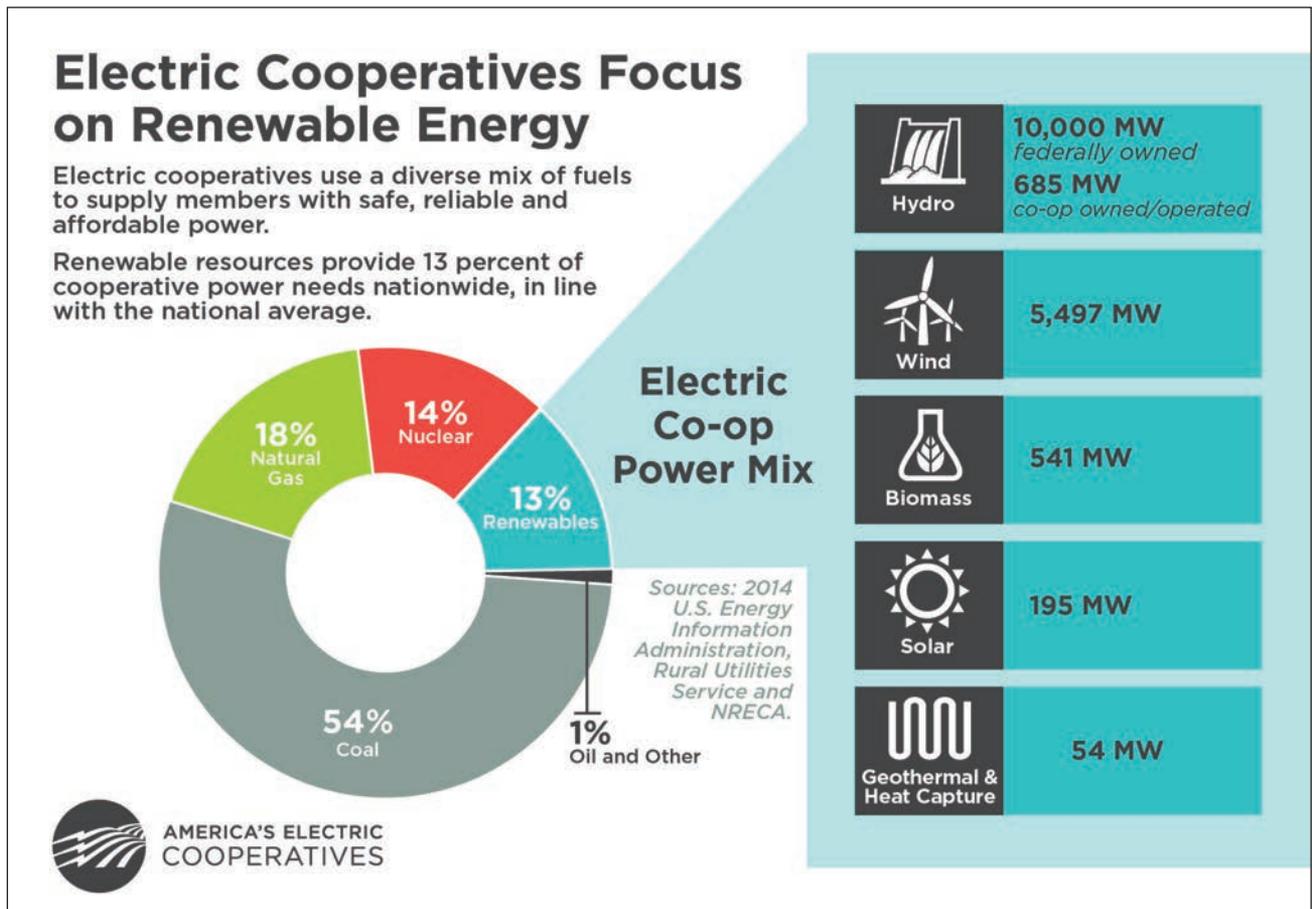
Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb. And you don't ever need to change the bulbs. In 50 years, when the fixture wears out, you'll replace the whole unit.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both the fan and a light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.



2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!
 Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Turn off lights when you leave a room.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p>Turn off water while brushing your teeth.</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.</p>	
	<p>JULY</p> <p>Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Take short showers instead of baths.</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.</p>	

January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
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**History for Kids:
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**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



We are committed to you

A message from your President and CEO

Another year has come and gone, but one thing that has remained constant is Gibson Electric Membership Corporation's commitment to providing you with safe, reliable and affordable electric service. We are uniquely committed to you because of our cooperative structure. Gibson EMC is member-owned, member-controlled and not-for-profit.

Ours is a long-standing relationship that started way back in 1936 when Gibson EMC was formed. For 80 years, your cooperative has been devoted to serving you and our other member-owners well. Beyond safe, reliable and affordable electric service, our definition of serving you well includes looking out for your interests and communicating effectively.

We look out for you interests by working with our local leaders and our chambers of commerce to support our existing businesses and industries because we know they are critical to our members' quality of life. We also work with our statewide associations and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association to communicate with legislators

about the impact of proposed legislation on our members. We communicate this and other important information to you through this publication.

But communication is a two-way street. We want and need to be good listeners. We recently surveyed our members who participate in Gibson EMC's Pay-Go program. (If you don't know about Pay-Go, I encourage you to take a look at page 23; you might want to take advantage of it.) We thank everyone who responded, and we commit to using this and other survey information to continually improve the services we provide. Later this year, we'll be doing a survey of our residential membership. If you're contacted, we hope you'll participate. We sincerely value your input.

Thank you for your continued support of Gibson EMC, and best wishes for a healthy and happy 2017.



*Dan Rodamaker
President and CEO
Gibson EMC*



Gibson EMC Board Member David Kimbell, left, is presented with a 20-year service award by KAEC President and CEO Chris Perry at the Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives Annual Meeting Nov. 14-15 in Louisville. Kimbell is serving a two-year term as the association board's chairman. Photo by Tim Webb Photography.

Sanders elected to co-op association board

Steve Sanders, Board Chairman of Gibson Electric Membership Corporation, was elected to the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association board of trustees at TECA's annual meeting in Nashville.

"We congratulate Steve," said David Callis, TECA executive vice president and general manager. "We appreciate his service and are confident he will provide sound direction and represent Tennessee's electric cooperatives with honor."

"The Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association informs and protects co-op members," says Sanders. "It is an honor to be a part of an organization that has such an important mission."

"Unified" was the theme of TECA's 75th annual meeting, held Sunday, Nov. 20, through Tuesday, Nov. 22, in Nashville.

The more than 350 electric cooperative leaders from across the state attending the event were reminded that they best serve consumer-owners when co-ops work together for a common purpose.

"Anniversaries present the unique opportunity to examine our past," says David Callis, TECA executive vice president and general manager. "The leaders who formed our co-ops and this association were visionaries, and their accomplishments merit our gratitude and celebration.

TECA is using this occasion as an opportunity to refine our focus and prepare the association to meet the challenges of the next 75 years through the leadership, advocacy and support we provide."



Gibson EMC Board Chairman Steve Sanders, elected to the board of trustees for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, presides over the Monday annual meeting sessions.



Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association Executive Vice President and General Manager David Callis presents a TECA Top Tenn Communications Award to Gibson EMC Communications Specialist Jenni Lynn Rachels, center, and Gibson EMC Vice President of Human Resources and Communications Rita Alexander at TECA's Annual Meeting in Nashville.

TECA provides legislative and communication support for Tennessee's 23 electric cooperatives and publishes *The Tennessee Magazine*, the state's most widely circulated periodical.

Employees and board members

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation's employees and board members understand the real meaning of service — both in the context of “helping someone” and “time spent working for an organization.” As a not-for-profit, member-owned and member-controlled cooperative, our job is to serve you. Whether we're listening to a concern, advising how you can make your home more energy-efficient or

working to restore your power after a storm, we are always striving to help. Many of our employees and board members also have devoted many years to Gibson EMC and Hickman-Fulton Counties Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation. Here are 12 who reached five-year service milestones during 2016. We appreciate these and all of our employees and board members for their dedicated service.



40 Years
Field Engineer
Jeff Boyd



40 Years
Field Engineer
Bobby Cotham



30 Years
VP of Operations
and System Planning
Barry Smith



20 Years
Board Member
David Kimbell



15 Years
Board Member
Larry Hicks



15 Years
Network and Managed
Services Coordinator
Robin McCaig



15 Years
Board Assistant
Secretary-Treasurer
Bob McCurdy



15 Years
Board Chairman
Steve Sanders

recognized for years of service



10 Years
First Class Lineworker
Jason Mills



10 Years
Forrester
Matt Prater



5 Years
Board Member
Tony Bargery



5 Years
First Class Lineworker
Bob Nerren

Pay-Go program earns high member survey marks

A big “thank you” to everyone who participated in our recent Pay-Go survey! Pay-Go is a prepay program Gibson Electric Membership Corporation offers as an alternative to traditional monthly billing with deposit. We think it’s an ideal choice for members who want to take control of their energy use and, based on their survey responses, many Pay-Go participants agree.

Of those who responded to our survey, 70 percent had been a Pay-Go participant for more than one year. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 10 being most satisfied), 63 percent gave the program a “10,” and more than 86 percent rated it an 8 or higher. A full 70 percent indicated that they or family members have improved their energy efficiency thanks to the daily balance notifications, and more than 86 percent said they would recommend Pay-Go to friends.

Here are a few of the answers members gave when asked, “What do you like about Pay-Go?”

- The ability to monitor daily electric use.
- It’s more budget-friendly.
- No surprise bill at the end of the month.

- Being able to track my use and identify the problem areas.
- I enjoy the convenience of getting daily notifications of my balance and adding money to my account when needed.
- Everything! I like being in control of my bill. I like being able to pay a small amount if it’s a tight week financially or being able to pay more when I have it available.

If you’d like to learn more about Pay-Go, just call or come by your local Gibson EMC member service center. We’ll be happy to help!

Happy New Year!

Gibson EMC’s member service centers will be closed on Monday, Jan. 2, so our employees can celebrate New Year’s Day with their families.

The Bike Man

Providing Christmas Year-Round

The bicycle ad said it all: “What dreams are made of ... a bright, shiny Roadmaster. The slick-riding bike that has everything a boy or girl could want ... electric horn, brake-operated stoplight, bumpers and Searchbeam headlight ... a dream come true!”

For an impressionable child in Finley, Tennessee, the ad may have been the reason he was convinced he needed a bike. Or maybe it was seeing his friends riding their bikes in his neighborhood. For whatever reason, a little boy named Frank Riddick wished for a bicycle he could call his own, but no matter how hard he wished, he never had a bicycle while he was a child.

“My parents were wonderful,” boasts a grown Frank Riddick. “They provided me and my five siblings with items we needed such as food and clothing, but they just never thought a bicycle was something we needed.”

As adults, Frank and his wife, Glenda, moved to Clinton, Kentucky, and began a farming operation. Though his days were occupied with farming, Frank admits that even in his 30s, he was still dreaming of the bicycle that eluded him in childhood.

The year after Frank quit farming (and he’s quick to point out that he quit and did not retire), he decided that he wanted to fulfill other children’s dreams and give every child in Clinton a bike. So, he acquired 55 bikes, loaded them on an open trailer and traveled to an area of town where he knew the children were in need. After the bicycles were quickly distributed, the

Riddicks prepared to go home. However, before they could leave the parking lot, a little boy around the age of 5 or 6 came up screaming, “I want a bike! I want a bike!”

“I felt so sorry for that little boy,” says Glenda, “and even though we were out of bikes, I insisted that Frank find a way to provide a bicycle for the child.”

As a quick fix, Frank returned to his shop and assembled a bicycle from the scrap iron pile. Frank recalls, “I have never seen a little boy any happier than that child when he received the old scrap bike.”

After a couple of days, the Riddicks had a better bike for the little boy and traded with him. Frank credits the experience with this child for giving him the passion he has for continuing to provide children with bicycles.

“I never intended to start repairing bicycles,” explains Frank, “especially since I did not enjoy working on farm equipment; however, I quickly learned that if I was willing to fix the bikes, people were glad to donate them to me. By receiving donated bicycles

and refurbishing them, I am able to continue distributing them to children in the area.”

After refurbishing the bicycles, around 30 are loaded onto an open trailer, and Frank and Glenda head out to put smiles on children’s faces. Frank also takes some items with him so he can repair bikes on site. While he is making repairs, Glenda is busy putting “Jesus Loves You” license plates on the bicycles. Children also are allowed to trade bikes they have outgrown or bikes that need repairs.



Frank Riddick refurbishes donated bicycles and distributes them to children.



Frank Riddick repairs a bicycle in his shop as part of a bike ministry that he and his wife, Glenda, began 20 years ago.

The bikes are mainly given to children who live in Clinton, Columbus, Hickman, Arlington, Bardwell, Mayfield and Fulton, Kentucky, and in South Fulton, Martin and sometimes Union City, Tennessee. One year, however, 20 bicycles were donated to a church and sent to missionary preachers in Ghana, West Africa. The following year, 50 additional bikes were sent to Africa for the villagers. Bicycles have also been donated to four different children's homes in Kentucky, to the Salvation Army and to children in Illinois and North Carolina.

Frank and Glenda are going into their 20th year of their bicycle ministry. Having continued in their out-

reach as long as they have, they are now giving to a second generation of children. When asked how many bicycles they have provided over the years, they both say they can only guess. They know that by the year 2008, around 600 bikes had been handed out, so now they are sure they have given more than 1,000. Frank also points out that in addition to the bikes given, they have repaired hundreds while they were at locations.

In the past, Frank went to Louisville, Kentucky, and helped members of Northeast Christian Church begin a bicycle ministry. The church gives away more than 1,000 bicycles a year and has helped another church start a similar ministry.

The story of the bike ministry has been shared in other publications over the years, and the Riddicks were hesitant to have it printed again. However, they hope that by sharing their story, other people will want to begin bicycle ministries of their own. Frank would enjoy having the opportunity to guide others in the process.

"There is no greater joy if you love kids than to give a child a bicycle if he or she does not have one," says Frank.

If you have bikes you would like to donate or if you would be interested in starting a bike ministry in your area, you can contact Frank Riddick at 270-653-4460.

Energy savings for every season

For most of us, saving money is a year-round objective, but the path to energy efficiency varies by season.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

Examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks,

and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost

or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy, this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

ENERGY STAR Buyers Guide

Purchasing ENERGY STAR-certified appliances and electronics is a great way to save energy in your home. But how do you choose the right product? It depends on your energy-saving goals and how you use energy in your home.



Do you wash multiple loads of laundry each week? Investing in an ENERGY STAR-certified washer could save you around \$45 on your utility bill each year. Some of the top-rated ENERGY STAR-certified large washers come from LG and Samsung. Visit ENERGY STAR's "Most Efficient 2016" page to learn more.



Home computers can use a shocking amount of energy each year. If all computers in the U.S. were ENERGY STAR certified, we would save more than \$1 billion in energy costs per year. If you can't buy an ENERGY STAR-certified computer, consider updating the power management setting on your computer. Visit energystar.gov/products/office_equipment/computers.



The larger TVs get, the more energy they use. But ENERGY STAR-certified TVs are, on average, 25% more efficient than conventional models. LG, Samsung and Vizio make the list of ENERGY STAR's most efficient 2016 TVs.

There are many different types of ENERGY STAR-certified products, including:

- Air purifiers
- Roof products
- Set-top boxes and cable boxes
- Decorative light strands
- Data center storage
- Pool pumps
- Vending machines
- Dehumidifiers

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter.

In extremely hot weather, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

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A Healthier New Year



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
423-235-6811

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:**
Jeff Ringley, District 5

Vice President:
Phil Barrett, District 6

Secretary-Treasurer:
Brent Price, District 4

Mark Derrick, District 7
Gordell Ely, District 2
Jerry Horner, District 3
David Marshall, District 1

Board Attorney:
Daniel Boyd

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

HEC explores smart grid for the future

Technology is already a big part of providing reliable power to our members here at Holston Electric Cooper-

ative. We utilize technology to read meters, process meter readings for bill rendering and tracking our members' account information. Years ago, HEC needed a lot of employees to do all of these tasks manually. In fact, every member's bill had to be handwritten and delivered to the local post offices in the areas we serve.

As a relatively small electric distribution company, we have to wait until technology becomes affordable. The cost of technology follows a predictable curve; new developments from hardware and software vendors are expensive while older components are more cost-effective. Only the largest utilities and companies have the ability to acquire new technologies right after they become available. Over time, technologies either mature and become economical to most companies or they become obsolete and die. Many technologies that HEC is using today were created 30 to 40 years ago by software companies and research and development monies provided by large utilities. Only in the past decade or so have outage management, interactive voice response, supervisory control and data acquisition, automatic vehicle

locator and automated meter reading systems become affordable for small distributors the size of your Holston EC system to acquire them and make

productive economical use of those.

Fast-forward to today's utility environment — large central-station generation plants are clinging for dear life, and upstart distributed energy resources are developing solar, wind and biomass energy sources. These renewable energy sources are becoming increasingly

attractive to individual and corporate members or communities of customers. Ultimately, the electric system of the future may need to be a "smart grid" to take advantage of intelligent electronic devices, e.g. meters, controls, relays, etc., and high-speed communications. The smart grid of the future will need to be able to control, measure and protect the grid for the two-way flow of power and information. The "internet of things" is being developed so that "smart" appliances will be able to operate more efficiently to benefit the consumer and the energy provider while at the same time reducing energy waste.

Holston EC has hired a firm to create a Smart Grid Initiative Business Plan to help determine whether we should build a smart grid and how to pay for it. Additionally, with the availability of high-speed

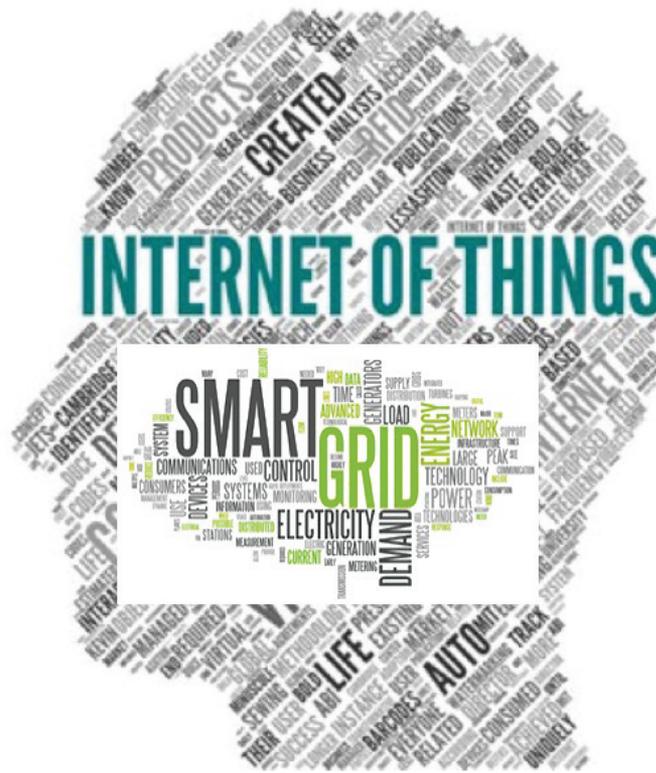


James B. Sandlin
General Manager,
Holston Electric
Cooperative

fiber optic communications needed for smart grid, Holston EC members should be able to get state-of-the-art telecommunications services like cable TV, high-speed internet and local telephone services. With the need of every generation of people in mind, the internet is no longer a luxury; it is a necessity. Just today, I went out and met one of our members who lives on Browns Mountain Road. The member has no internet service available from a cable

TV or telephone company. Because mountains are on two sides of him, satellite internet is not possible.

Today, access to affordable high-speed internet is paramount to each of us having the ability to participate in current events, online shopping,



serve many parts of Hawkins and Hamblen counties, people bonded together and formed Holston Electric Cooperative to do just that. Maybe our smart grid project using fiber optic lines could be the next greatest thing in which HEC could play a vital role.

education, job-searching, online training, healthcare research, and entertainment. In my opinion, our members who live in Browns Mountain, Persia, Surgoinsville, Mooresburg or any other part of the HEC service area are just as important as anyone living in Knoxville, Dallas, Los Angeles or any other city that has high-speed internet and advanced telecommunications services. More than 75 years ago when private power companies refused to

Meet the new Holston EC employee

Consumer services representative Sarah Clevinger

Sarah Clevinger joined the Customer Service Department at Holston Electric Cooperative in November. With previous experience as a bank teller, she brings a strong skill set to HEC.

Clevinger, daughter of Brandee Smith and Sean and Tammy Clevinger, is a graduate of Cherokee High School. The Rogersville resident also attended Walters State Community College, receiving an associate of applied science degree in business administration.

In her spare time, Clevinger enjoys traveling, shopping, crafting and spending time with family. She attends Persia United Methodist Church.

Holston Electric Cooperative extends a warm welcome to our newest employee.



Holston Electric Cooperative Member Meetings

Learn about and help determine the future: your broadband choice

This March, Holston Electric Cooperative will be asking you to help determine your broadband future as we host our first-ever series of member meetings. Make your voice matter as you learn about broadband options and what they mean to you, your family and community. Jimmy Sandlin, general manager of Holston Electric Cooperative, will host the meetings at which we will be asking for your input on:

- The level of interest and demand for broadband choice.
- How you currently use broadband and what you would like to have more access to.
- Whether Holston EC should explore a broadband offering in partnership with another provider.
- Smart grid for your home, business and community.

As a thank-you for participating, each member who attends will receive a \$10 bill credit, dinner and free gift.

In addition, Holston is partnering with One Accord Ministries to host a food drive at the member meetings. Members are encouraged to bring a canned food item to be directly donated to One Accord Ministries' food pantries located in Hawkins County.

Mark your calendar to attend one of these meetings:

Where: St. Clair Elementary

Date: Tuesday, March 7, 2017

Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: Holston EC Auditorium, Rogersville

Date: Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

Where: Surgoinsville Middle School

Date: Thursday, March 9, 2017

Time: 5:30-7:30 p.m.

For more information and to register for a meeting, visit www.holstonelectric.com or call 423-272-8821.

**HOLSTON
ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE
MEMBER
MEETINGS**

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

**ATTEND A MEETING ON:
MARCH 7, 8 or 9, 2017
FOR MORE DETAILS:
HOLSTONELECTRIC.COM**

Virtual home-energy audits

By Tom Tate

Is your home using energy efficiently? Unless it was built quite recently to stringent energy-efficiency standards, there are bound to be areas of your home where you can improve efficiency, save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

In a perfect world, your best option is to hire a trained professional to conduct a full-blown, in-home energy audit. This usually involves a detailed inspection of your home's insulation levels, HVAC system, lighting, appliances and exterior space. A professional energy auditor will typically conduct a blower door test to check pressurization and spot hard-to-find leaks in the exterior. In addition, a professional may use a duct blaster to identify leaks in your home's ductwork.

One drawback to the in-home energy audit is finding a time that works with your busy schedule. An energy audit can take several hours when done correctly, which means you might have to take time off from work, farm out the pets, get help with the kids and their after-school activities — and so forth.

Luckily, there is a viable alternative: the online or “virtual” home energy audit. These tools have come a long way over the last 10 years. Today's online energy audits are user-friendly and take only a few minutes to complete. An online energy audit can provide an assessment of your home's energy efficiency and typically provides helpful tips on how to reduce energy waste. The audits utilize sophisticated computer models that typically use local housing types — factoring in the age, size, flooring and construction materials of the home — and local weather data.

I have used several of these audits and found that they typically come within a dollar or two of my actual energy bills when fed the correct information. Amazing! True, the audit won't provide a pressurization test of your home and ductwork, but it is a convenient start.

Here's where to look for online audits:

- Nearby utilities: They will include comparable weather and housing data, so the audit will be more precise.
- The Department of Energy: hes.lbl.gov/consumer

A word of caution: Be careful when using online energy audit software provided by organizations other



If you want to know how energy-efficient your home really is, an “in-person” home energy audit conducted by a certified professional is ideal. But if you can't find the time to hire a professional and schedule the appointment, consider a convenient online energy audit. Source: StockSnap

than utilities, government agencies or universities. Unfortunately, some companies may try to obtain information to sell their own products and services. If you see phrases like, “Learn what your power company does not want you to know,” or the site looks like a marketing page, I'd suggest moving on. Unless you are dealing with a local electric co-op or your trusted utility provider, give no personal information outside of your physical address (for data accuracy) or an email address for receiving a full report.

If an online energy audit doesn't interest you, fear not. The Department of Energy offers a do-it-yourself energy audit section on its website: energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-home-energy-audits.

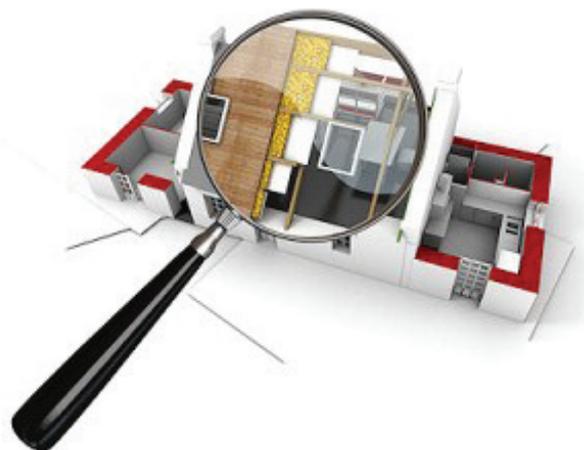
The bottom line? Choose the energy audit that works for you, then implement as many of the recommendations as you can. Even taking small steps can add up to significant results, and you'll see the benefits in your utility bills for years to come.

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.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older.

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of



overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.

- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.



Does Rover really need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.



A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged

occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.

- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire. Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.
- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off of the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.2eScore.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

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Mountain Electric Cooperative

604 S. Church St.
Mountain City, TN 37683
423-727-1800
www.mountainelectric.com

Newland, N.C., office
1373 Elk Park Highway
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 —
George Lowe (District 2)
Vice President —
David Ellis (District 8)
Secretary/Treasurer —
W.O. Hampton (District 7)
Joe Atwood (District 1)
Ross Dowell (District 3)
R. Bruce Lacey (District 5)
Harry Smith (District 4)
Ronnie Townson (District 6)

AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Ownership matters

Chances are you don't think too often about your ownership role with your electric co-op.

Every member of Mountain Electric Cooperative can take pride in the fact that you are an owner of your electric co-op. While at times it may seem easy to take the provision of electricity for granted, we are working 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to make sure you, the member-owners of the co-op, are well taken care of when it comes to your electric-ity needs.

Electricity is a critical need, but it takes more than poles, wires and kilowatt-hours to make a community. Locally based cooperatives believe a special bond and obligation exist among the co-op and the communities. Mountain Electric understands that you can't sell electricity to a business that has closed its doors or to people who have left the community because there are not enough local opportunities.

Key concerns of Mountain Electric are attracting new business and industry; expanding present business and industry; creating additional jobs; and improving vocational training, infrastructure and necessary community facilities and services. MEC's two economic development programs, the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and Sup-

porting Efforts for Economic Development (SEED), were created to focus on these areas and are extremely important for improving the economic well-being and quality of life to the people in our service area.

We are co-op owners, and in a real sense, we are owners of our community. Our community is strong. Think about how much greater it can be when we work cooperatively to tackle our future challenges. If we act like owners

on a consistent basis, we will put even more care and attention into our community, and we will look locally for solutions. Finding local solutions can help keep money — and people — right here in our community.

We all have a role to play. Ownership does matter. As your local electric cooperative, we promise to do our part for the community. If you have thoughts about how we can do a better job, please let us know. You are the owners of the co-op, and we welcome your active participation.



Joe Thacker
General Manager,
Mountain Electric
Cooperative

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

Operation Pocket Change

Changing Lives with Pocket Change

The Operation Pocket Change program funded \$26,753.30 in community/individual service grants in November. Since the inception of the program in 2002, more than \$2 million in grants and scholarships has been awarded. Applications can be picked up at any office and are also available online at www.mountainelectric.com. Completed applications must be submitted to one of the co-op offices prior to the second Tuesday of each month. For additional information, contact the office of Member Services at 423-727-1811.

Grants in November

Dry Run Volunteer Fire Department: AED machine.	\$1,035
Friends of the Johnson County Library: Sewing machines for community sewing class.	\$4,000
Individual: House fire recovery.	\$1,850
Individual: Medical hardship.	\$1,300
Minneapolis Community: Exercise equipment for community center.	\$7,500
Reaching Avery Ministries: Avery Project Christmas.	\$2,500
Linville Volunteer Fire Department: Turn-out gear.	\$8568.30

Total for November. \$26,753.30

The program is completely voluntary. All it takes is a phone call to your local MEC to enroll in the program. You can also cancel at any time by simply making a phone call. Roughly 26,000 consumers participate in the program.

Operation Pocket Change College Scholarship applications will be available at your local MEC office in January.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

Scholarship winner attends TECA annual meeting

Montana Woodard of Trade, Tennessee, recently represented Mountain Electric at the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association annual meeting in Nashville. Montana attended the Washington Youth Tour in June and competed against 20 of her peers from across the state, earning the honor as Tennessee's Youth Leadership Council representative. At the annual meeting, Montana spoke to the large crowd about how much it meant to attend the Washington Youth Tour and how much she enjoyed the experiences and friendships she made on the trip. Currently a student at Johnson County High School in Mountain City, Montana plans to attend college in the fall of 2017. Thank you, Montana, for a job well done!



Calendar of Events

Sugar Mountain, N.C.

Jan 8 • 22nd Annual Winter Trails Day
Jan 22 • High Country Junior Race Series
For more information, call 800-784-2768.

Beech Mountain, N.C.

Jan 7 • USASA Southeastern Series
Jan 8 • High Country Junior Race Series
Jan 16 • 36th Annual Adaptive Learn to Ski Event
Jan 21 • So-Gnar Snowboard Camp
For more information, call 800-438-2093.



This month, MEC Director of Member Services Sally Snyder celebrates 10 years of service.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the

inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Wintertime is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.



5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179

Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

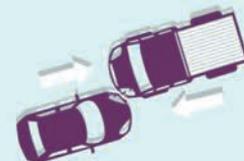
21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)



4X RISK



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)

2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!

Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Turn off lights when you leave a room.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p>Turn off water while brushing your teeth.</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.</p>	
	<p>JULY</p> <p>Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Take short showers instead of baths.</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.</p>	

Be prepared for winter storms

By Abby Berry

When winter temperatures drop and storms hit, it can be challenging to stay safe and warm. Winter storm severity varies depending on where you live, but nearly all Americans are affected by extreme winter storms at some point. Mountain Electric Cooperative cares about your safety, and we want you to be prepared.

Heavy snow and ice can lead to downed power lines, leaving co-op members without power. In extremely cold temperatures, this can be dangerous. During a power outage, our crews will continue to work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power. Here are a few things you can do to prepare yourself:

- **Stay warm** — Plan to use a safe alternate heating source such as a fireplace or wood-burning stove during a power outage. These are great options to keep you and your loved ones warm, but exercise caution, and never leave the heating source unattended. If you depend on gasoline-, propane- or natural gas-burning devices to stay warm, never use them indoors. Remember that fuel- and wood-burning sources of heat must be properly ventilated. Always read the manufacturer's directions before using.
- **Stay fed** — The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends having handy several days' worth of food that does not need to be cooked. Crackers, cereal, canned goods and bread are good options. Keep 5 gallons of water per person available in the event of an extended power outage.
- **Stay safe** — When an outage occurs, it usually means power lines are down. It is best not to travel during winter storms, but if you must, bring a survival kit along, and do not travel alone. If you encounter downed lines, always assume they are live. Stay as far away from the downed lines as possible, and report the situation to our dispatchers.

Because winter weather can be unpredictable and dangerous, planning ahead can often be the difference between life and death. Mountain Electric



is ready for what Mother Nature has in store, and we want you to be ready, too. For more winter safety tips, visit www.ready.gov/winterweather.

Abby Berry 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.

*Please call your local office to report an outage:
Mountain City, Tenn. — 423-727-1800
Newland, N.C. — 828-733-0159
Roan Mountain, Tenn. — 423-772-3521*

Prepay gives you the power to control your electric bill

As times and needs change, Mountain Electric Cooperative offers its members new technologies and choices that allow them to maximize their energy dollars and manage their electric use.

Prepay allows members to:

- Say goodbye to deposits
- Customize a payment schedule
- Buy electricity when convenient

Prepay members:

- Never pay late fees
- Never receive paper bills

Frequently asked questions

How do I make Prepay work for me?

Prepay works best for people who want to take control of their electric account and energy use.

By monitoring your consumption on a regular basis, you will begin to notice patterns in your daily use.

As you monitor your use, you will begin to see when you are using more energy and find ways to lower your electric bill. Studies have shown that participating households generally use 12 percent less electricity than they did before signing up for a prepay program.

You can make convenient payments at Mountain Electric Cooperative's office by calling your local MEC office or online by using a debit or credit card or e-check.

To find out if Prepay is right for you, call us or visit www.mountainelectric.com.

Will I receive a low-balance notification or pending disconnect notification prior to disconnection?

Yes. You will receive daily account balance notifications via text message or email. You will be responsible for monitoring the account balance. Electric service will be subject to disconnection, including on weekends and holidays, once the fund balance of the account reaches \$0.

How can I make a payment on my account?

Payments can be made at any MEC office during regular business hours, over the phone or online at

www.mountainelectric.com. These payments will be reflected on your account within one hour.

Once I have replenished my fund balance, how long will it take to restore power?

If a lapse in funds occurs, please allow at least one hour for your power to be restored. If the power is not restored within two hours, please call your local office.

What fees are associated with a Prepay account?

Once the initial \$5 membership fee and \$25 connect fee have been paid to open the account, a recurring \$6 monthly administration fee will be applied to the account for participating in the Prepay program. Prepay accounts are not charged late fees or collection fees; however, normal reconnection fees do apply.

Do I have to pay a deposit?

No deposit is required to open a Prepay account. Any deposit previously paid by the member will be applied to the member's traditional account.

Once all outstanding debt has been paid in full, any remaining credit will be applied to the member's Prepay account balance.

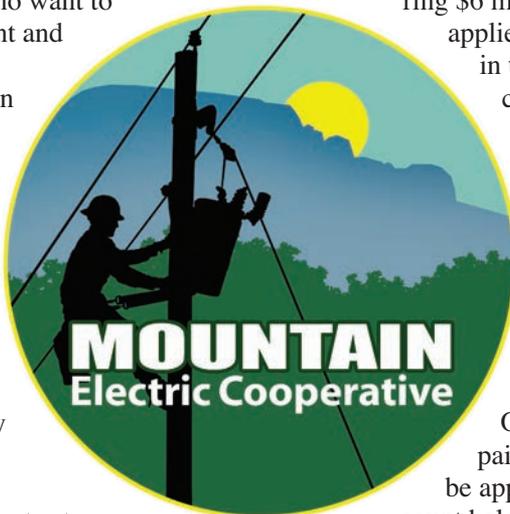
New or existing residential members can sign up at any MEC office (requires 200 amp service or smaller). A minimum of \$75 for existing members or \$108 for new members (includes \$5 membership, \$25 connection fee and \$3 credit assessment check) is required to participate. Members participating in the Energy Right Heat Pump Loan program, leveled billing or automatic bank draft are not eligible to participate.

Will I receive a monthly statement?

No. Participating members will access their account information online at www.mountainelectric.com and will receive daily text messages and/or emails.

How often is my account use updated?

The cooperative will bill you for your use the two days prior and deduct the bill amount from the credit on your account once daily.



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A Healthier New Year



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
mlec.com

- *Ready to Work: Co-ops and Elected Officials*
- *Energy Savings for Every Season*
- *Safely Removing Outside Christmas Lights*



Like

or



Follow

The more things change ...

A brand-new year is here, and no one knows exactly what will transpire in 2017. As each day unfolds, new chapters will be written in your story and in Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative's.

For us, regardless of the situation, consistency is a must. I don't mean doing the same thing the same way day-in and day-out. The task and the way to get it accomplished may change, but the driving force behind everything we do is and always has been you, our members.

While many things are uncertain, you can always count on MLEC's commitment to serve you. Sometimes that means discovering new ways to do things we've done for years. On the other hand, sometimes it means relying on our strong service record and holding steady. And, when storms or other unexpected things happen, it means being confident enough in our abilities to be flexible and productive.

Making sure that happens requires having a game plan. For MLEC, that includes focusing on the Seven Cooperative Principles and key missions to which we aspire every day. It is part of being a not-for-profit, member-owned electric cooperative.

When decisions are consistently made with the mission of putting members first, we can't go wrong. At the end of the day, we know the lights have to be on, the price as low as possible and the service top-notch. Ultimately, it's about serving our members.

At our core, MLEC's job is about service. "Back in the day," it was about

one thing: providing safe, affordable, reliable energy to a generation that had been kept in the dark. Today, it means so much more. The lights still have to be on, but MLEC's role in the community is more than just being the electric provider.

Our mission encompasses a

commitment to improving the quality of life in the communities we serve. This could entail speaking with legislators to make sure local voices are heard when laws and bills are passed. Then again, it is just as important to us to provide books to third-graders, scholarships to high school students and safety presentations at the senior citizens center.

MLEC is also focused on industry changes and the need for broadband

in our rural hometowns. If there is a more efficient way for MLEC to serve you, we're all for it. If we can provide expertise to businesses to help lower energy bills and enable them to offer more jobs, count us in. Likewise, if we can convince state legislators that our neighborhoods have been denied reasonably priced, reliable, high-speed internet, just give us an opportunity to tell the story.

These missions, these areas of focus, come naturally to electric cooperatives. We've consistently been a trusted source of power and information for generations. As new ones are born in the year ahead and new challenges arise in 2017, MLEC will be here to light the way.

So, I guess what they say is true: "The more things change, the more they stay the same."



Keith Carnahan
President and CEO,
Meriwether Lewis Electric
Cooperative

Keith



From left are, standing, Mandy Hamm, five years; Matthew Chessor and Ed Greenwell, 10 years; Brent Warf, 15 years; Dawn Orton, 20 years; and Jeff Rye, 25 years. Seated: Dwight Bates and Randal Anderson, 35 years; and Stony Odom, 30 years. Not Pictured: Lauren Tate, five years; Neal Buck, 10 years; and Aaron Hinson, 20 years.

#MLECCommitted

Concern for community. Three little words that mean a lot in the co-op world. Focusing on member needs and helping develop the communities we serve make up one of the Seven Cooperative Principles.

Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative strives to deliver on the promise of quality service to you, our member-owners, and live out the concern for community principle every day.

“I love helping folks, whatever it is. I appreciate that MLEC has worked over the years to improve our response time and recover quicker when outages happen.”

— MLEC Hickman County District Manager
Dwight Bates, 35 years of service

Take, for example, the MLEC board. Directors live in your hometown and are elected by you, the people they serve. MLEC Board Chairman Dr. Zack Hutchens of Hickman County and Vice Chairman Andy Porch of Humphreys County serve alongside 11 other dedicated board members. Collectively, this group makes sure the needs and concerns of their hometowns are taken into consideration as policies are passed and programs are developed.

It’s also important to have employees with a solid work ethic and desire to give back to their communities. MLEC

employees and board members stay up to date on the latest electric industry trends and participate in training to better meet our members’ needs.

At the same time, employees volunteer with local organizations, including our own MLEC Cares. Each December, money contributed by employees during the year is given to help local families pay for utilities, food and gifts as well as support others like the foster children’s fund. Employees also organize food drives and other activities to give back throughout the year.

“The relationship we have with our members is important. I remember the 1994 ice storm and the long, cold days of working to get people’s lights back on. Everyone was so nice by offering help.”

— MLEC Humphreys County Journey Lineworker
Randal Anderson, 35 years of service

As employees, MLEC’s crew is proud to serve our members and celebrate milestones like service anniversaries. We do so because of what it represents: years of service spent on working outages, creating new programs and services and remaining committed to helping whenever and wherever needed. We do it not because it sells electricity but because MLEC employees and board members bring the Seventh Cooperative Principle — Concern for Community — to life.



1



5



2



3



4

Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative ORNAMENT CONTEST

Being a friend to our community and playing an active role with our youngest members are important to Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative.

One example of our commitment to engage with them is MLEC's annual ornament contest. Each year, we encourage students in kindergarten through eighth grade to create Christmas ornaments. We award three winners in each of our five counties in three grade divisions: kindergarten through second, third through fifth, and sixth through eighth. Winners receive \$50 gift cards, and with their parents, are our honored guests for a night of fellowship and learning about their cooperative.

"You often hear that today's youth are tomorrow's leaders, and that is certainly true when it comes to those who live in a home served by an electric cooperative," says MLEC President and CEO Keith Carnahan. "Not only could they be future leaders as MLEC employees and board members, but one day they'll also be our owners. Working with them now and teaching them about the cooperative difference are vital."

This year's winners are faces you've no doubt seen in your neighborhood, on your child's ball team, at church or in the grocery store. Let's celebrate with them on their accomplishments!

1. Hickman County winners, from left, Lexi Brackman and Abigail Gilbert. Not pictured: Carlin Cochran
2. Lewis County winners, from left, Trace Turner, Keira Halbrooks and Blayne King
3. Perry County winners, from left, Ethan Duncan, Will Southall and Rylee McKnight
4. Humphreys County winners, from left, Kycen Damesworth, Natalie Mays and Joshua Leonard
5. Houston County winners, from left, Summer Veliz, Hannah Edwards and Johnny Veliz

Let's talk: generator safety

With winter well underway, one of Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative's top priorities is delivering safe, reliable, low-cost electricity to you, our members. Another thing MLEC strives to deliver is information that helps keep you and your family safe by understanding potential dangers this winter.

So, let's talk about generator safety, specifically portable generators. Should an extended power outage occur, a portable generator can be a helpful piece of equipment. But, if not installed correctly, you can put yourself as well as MLEC's lineworkers at risk of injury or even death.

The safest way to connect a portable electric generator to your existing wiring is to have a licensed electrical contractor/technician install a transfer switch so there is no danger of back-feeding on the power lines (*see definition and diagram below*). Here are a few more safety tips to keep in mind when using a portable generator:

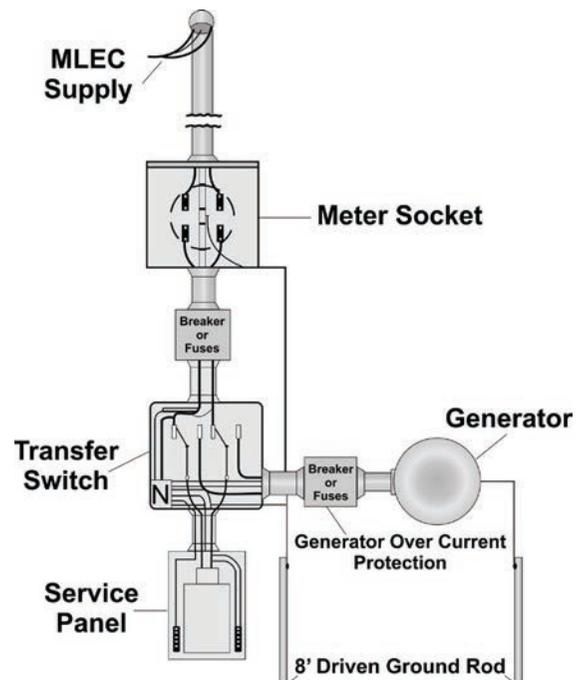
- Never plug your portable generator into a wall outlet in your home — this causes back-feeding and is a serious risk to the safety of lineworkers because it can energize power lines thought to be dead.
- Plug appliances directly into the outlet on the generator using only heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cords — make sure cords have three prongs and are not frayed or cut.
- Never operate the generator in enclosed spaces.
- Ensure that your generator is properly grounded.
- Never overload a generator, and turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting down.
- When refueling, shut down the generator and let it cool down — gasoline or kerosene spilled on a hot generator can start a fire.
- Always have a fully charged fire extinguisher nearby.
- Read and adhere to the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation. Never cut corners when it comes to safety!

Back-feeding 101: "Back-feeding" could mean a lot of different things, but when it comes to portable generators, it could mean damage to equipment and injury or death to people. If a home generator isn't installed properly, the electricity will flow from the generator back to the transformer — that is back-feeding.

When this happens, the transformer works in reverse, and high-voltage electricity flows back into MLEC's power lines where it can pose a danger to linemen working to restore power, believing the lines they are working on to be de-energized, or "dead." Without knowing that a line has been re-energized by an improperly installed home generator, a lineman can come in contact with the live line and be seriously hurt or even killed.

"Never run the generator in the home, basement or garage (even with the door open). Always place it outside the home at least 20 feet from windows, doors or vents like the dryer or foundation. These are paths for carbon monoxide to enter the home. Remember: Carbon monoxide is a silent killer, so have a working carbon monoxide monitor in the home to detect fumes before they become deadly."

— Gene Hale,
MLEC Safety Coordinator





FOUR SEASONS

OUTDOORS



& SPORTS



Everyone has a dream of some sort. For Chris Hughes of Hickman County, it was owning his own sporting goods store. You can see his dream come to life by trekking just off the town square to 112 Church St. in Centerville.

Four Seasons Outdoors & Sports is just the place to visit if you are looking for hunting and fishing supplies or guns and ammunition. Chris (below left) and his employee, Rick Howell (below right), have you covered with a wide variety of products available at the store.

“It doesn’t matter whether someone comes in and spends \$10 or \$1,000 — though \$1,000 is preferred!” says Chris with a laugh. “I always try to make a point to speak to whomever stops by the store.”



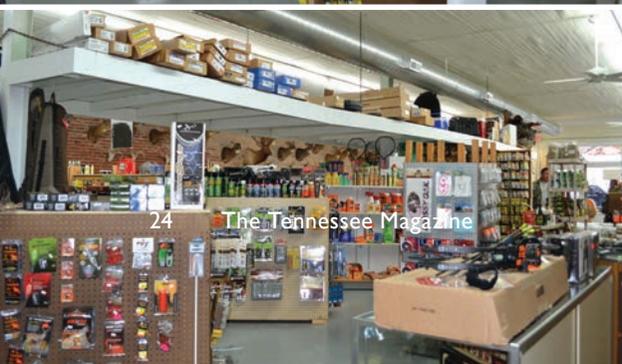
When the weather is right, it is all about fishing supplies and helping people “catch” just the right deal for a relaxing day on the water. If it is hunting season, guns, ammunition, or anything else you might need to bag the “big one” is available in Four Seasons. Guns are definitely the store’s most popular items.

“I always dreamed of owning a store like this,” says Chris. “I worked for Nissan for several years, but in 2009, I was able to open the store and realize my dream.”



Chris says that getting to know new people as they stop in or seeing them in town is one of the best parts of owning the store. No doubt many stories of the big fish or buck that got away have been shared over the years.

Four Seasons is open Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. When you stop in, check out the great selection and show your MLEC Co-op Connections Card. It can save you 10 percent off any in-store purchase, excluding firearms. Don’t be guilty of letting a big deal out of your sights!



Ways to Save with Wagner

Mission winter: Keep heat in!

Here we are embarking on a new year, and our minds are whirling as we recover from the holidays. Credit card bills are arriving to remind us just how jolly and giving we were at Christmas, and we're making personal promises to start saving money.

What's a homeowner to do? You're in luck because you are served by an electric cooperative. We care about our members and want to be a source of power and information.

Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative is here to help you kick off 2017 with some energy-saving advice for simple, low-cost and no-cost ways to make a difference on your energy bill. Oh, and did we mention there might be some cash-back incentives?

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During winter months, consumers want a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out.

It certainly is not "Mission Impossible," but if you choose to accept it, your mission for a warmer home and a more manageable energy bill could be your reward!

To maintain a warm indoor environment and save on energy costs, try these simple steps:

- Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings.
- Examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts.
- During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.
- As the temperature drops lower, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level.

Contact MLEC Energy Specialist Nathan Wagner for more info at nathan.wagner@mlec.com or 931-729-7257.



- Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration.
- Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees).
- Does your home need more insulation? With assistance from MLEC and the eScore™ program, you can insulate your home for less! Up to \$750 in rebates is available.

Does any of that sound like something you could do? Sure it does, and MLEC is here to help. Just call us with your energy questions, and let us guide you through the process. It's easy and reaps benefits year-round — unlike those credit card statements!

Money with your name on it

Meriwether Lewis Electric Cooperative might have money that's owed to you or someone you know. Following is a list of unclaimed checks issued to former members of MLEC for items such as deposit refunds. State law requires these be kept on a two-year rotation. If you see your name on the list or know how to reach someone listed, please call us. If not claimed, the money will be turned over to the state of Tennessee as required. All names listed are due a refund of \$10 or more. *(All cities listed are in Tennessee unless stated otherwise.)*

Wilburn, Marie Angelica - Hohenwald
 Culbert, Paula Kay - Nashville
 Henson, Heather - Hohenwald
 Moore, Jane C. - Waverly
 Qualls, Ronald L. - Hohenwald
 X&L Construction - Nashville
 Campbell, G. Scott - Waverly
 Smith, Larry W - McEwen
 Winchester, Michael Allen - Camden
 Winfree, Kimberly S. - McEwen
 Bennett, Taylor D. - Centerville
 Jairels, Billy - Waverly
 Johnson, Jack L. - Friendship
 Powell, Ronald W. - Mayfield, KY
 Heard, David Raymond - Hohenwald
 Walker, Jeff Michael - Savannah
 Olmstead, Joseph F. - Memphis
 Taylor, James Paul - New Johnsonville
 Criss, Sharon Judith - Katy, TX
 McBride, Sarah M. - Mount Victory, OH
 Mercer, Christopher J. - Oklahoma, OK
 Rhudy, Oscar G. - Birmingham, AL
 Speer, Brandon Tyler - Erin
 Green, James P. - Lebanon
 Medlin, M. William - Waverly

Tinin, Jeremy - Lobelville
 Estate of Billy Uno - Hohenwald
 Mercer, Christopher J. - Oklahoma, OK
 Rowell, Dustin J. - Hohenwald
 Black II, Dennis P. - New Johnsonville
 Goodall, Christopher Andrew - Erin
 Hollis, Bobby Ray - Erin
 Hughes, Dorothy S. - Maysville, GA
 Lemons, Marina - Tulare, CA
 Wyatt, Bobby Joel - Hohenwald
 Burns, Barbara J. - Waynesboro
 Hall, Susan Marie - Waverly
 Alley, Troy - Dickson
 Moss, Charity J. - Lyles
 Hankins, Kathleen Edith - Hohenwald
 Parrott, Leo - Hohenwald
 Gilley, Dianna Lynn - Centerville
 Allshouse, Michele - Erin
 Beechum-Mathis, Patricia A. - Erin
 Brown, Brandi Nicole - Hohenwald
 Truxillo, Leonna Christine - Hurricane Mills
 Winget, Bobby Glenn - Linden
 Frasier, Robby Alan - Hanover, PA
 McFeron, Alva Raymond - Linden

Adams, James W. - Erin
 Bigham, James Joseph - Hurricane Mills
 Calderon, Anthony - Waverly
 Fipps, Lawrence F. - Lyles
 Conway, Shonda - Hohenwald
 DeLoach, Brittany Michelle - McEwen
 Huelsenbeck, Sheba Lynn - Waverly
 McCann, Rachel Lynn - Hohenwald
 Willis, Michelle R. - Clarksville
 Kelley, Jammie - Parsons
 Peery, Linda N. - Linden
 Banes, Scarlett D. - Ashland City
 Beatty, Samuel E. - Mt. Pleasant
 Hulan, Alice J.M. - McEwen
 Moore, Heather LeighAnn - Hurricane Mills
 Stills, Tamara Jean - Summertown
 Wherry, Carolyn Christine - Summertown
 Austin, Elizabeth C. - Kuttawa, KY
 Buchanan, Deborah - New Johnsonville
 Shaver, Timmy Shane - Portland
 Fairweather, Ashley - Linden
 Roberson, Lucas Kyle - New Johnsonville

Adams, Steven Joseph - Waverly
 Strassburger, Michael D. - Lyles
 Dill, Charlie - Linden
 Sanders, Joseph Aaron - Hohenwald
 Alber, Morgan Chasity - McEwen
 Sellars, Chris - Spring Hill
 Ginter Jr., James E. - Fredericksburg, VA
 McMorris, Norris M. - Clifton
 Calvert, Kaitlyn - Linden
 Simpkins, Regina - New Johnsonville
 Smith, Lee Wallace - Centerville
 Delgadillo, Jose Dejesus - Waynesboro
 Hall, Derrick Jason - Waverly
 Taylor, Matthew A. - New Johnsonville
 Vanderpool, David - Brentwood
 Powell, Emory - Tennessee Ridge
 Shorter, Donald - Erin
 Zoglio, Tailina - Linden
 Cannady, Phil - Nashville
 Vaughn, Rita Roxann - Bon Aqua
 Castruccio, James F. - Clarksville
 French, Kimberly Renee - Waverly
 Saba, Diana - Frederiksted, VI
 Best, Willa Jean - Smyrna



Kicking off the new year with the goal of spending more time with your family?

Let MLEC's convenient payment options help!

- Online billing
- Kiosks
- Bankdraft

To learn more, visit mlec.com or your local MLEC office.

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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STOP paying for channels you don't watch!

Start with **DISH's** most popular channels...



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additional Channel Packs start at only **\$6/mo.**

Action Channel Pack	Variety Channel Pack	Kids Channel Pack	Locals Channel Pack
<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>

FREE **HBO** **CINEMAX** **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.

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FREE **HD** for life

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay.

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January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



Local. Green. Solar made simple.

The sun is rising on a new year for your electric cooperative ... and in more ways than one.

As the new year starts, so begins an opportunity for you or any other residential Middle Tennessee Electric member to purchase solar power — renewable energy generated by a new solar generation facility brought to you by your cooperative. This past November, we completed construction and began operation of a solar array — a 1 megawatt system located in College Grove (Williamson County). It's working beautifully, and now we're ready to make this renewable energy available to residential members interested in green energy.

We've done our best to make it easy and economical. You can get access to your share of Cooperative Solar for just \$20 a month. That \$20 will buy you the electric generation output of five solar panels. Each month you participate, you'll see a \$20 participation charge on your bill, but you will also have a credit for the output. In some months, the generation will be less than the \$20, but in other months, it will exceed that. Generation will fluctuate, and the months that it produces less than \$20 is the premium associated with solar power.

Cooperative Solar is the answer for many members we've heard from who have an interest in solar. For the vast majority, trying to enter the solar market on their own is daunting. It can be very expensive ... especially upfront costs.

And it can be complex, including safety concerns ... especially around interconnectivity. Cooperative Solar makes it economical and easy. Plus, there will be no long-term contracts and no maintenance for participants to worry about.

In the true spirit of the cooperative way, Cooperative Solar is about working together toward making solar power available to as many members as possible. Middle Tennessee Electric was born out of a need and created to serve. Our founding members formed the cooperative 80 years ago to bring electricity to this area, to do it in a not-for-profit way and to serve the good of the collective membership. Cooperative Solar starts us on a new journey toward filling a new need, serving our members in a new way for the good of the membership as a whole.

It is our goal to be the solar leader among electric companies in the Tennessee Valley...and that's just where we are. Last year, working with our members, we installed more solar generation than any other power distributor across the seven states of the Tennessee Valley. But while those solar installations were owned by individuals or organizations, MTEM's Cooperative Solar facility is owned by all our members ... and it's available to any member.



Chris Jones
President,
Middle Tennessee
Electric
Membership
Corporation

As any good cooperative would want to do, we sought to leverage economies of scale to keep things local, and, of course, to make Cooperative Solar affordable, reliable and safe. I'm pleased to report that this facility was designed to pay for itself, so there will be no impact or cost to those members who do not wish to participate.

The College Grove installation is our first,

but it will not be our last. As we continue to take the steps toward being your trusted energy adviser in both traditional and renewable energy, we will be looking to expand this type of program.

I would be remiss if I didn't alert you to a volume of bad information about solar power in the marketplace. While there is also good information along with lots of reputable businesses, a number of those companies promoting solar should be examined with skepticism. Please know that whatever your interest in solar may be, you can have confidence in starting the conversation with your member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative. We exist solely to help and serve you ... with your interests in mind first and foremost.

If you're ready for Cooperative Solar, log on to www.mtemc.com/CooperativeSolar or give us a call at 615-297-5256.

SOLAR MADE SIMPLE BY MTEM

Are you doing...

The easiest good thing you'll ever do

In March of last year, Middle Tennessee Electric relaunched its charitable foundation with a streamlined approach to giving. The relaunch brought under the single Sharing Change umbrella the charitable efforts of the cooperative, providing members an easier approach to making a difference in their communities.

As one of the seven guiding principles of a cooperative, Concern for Community is a cornerstone of MTEMC, and this foundation provides the vehicle in which the cooperative can join with members to help local nonprofit organizations fulfill their missions.

"Over the last 13 years, Middle Tennessee Electric members have given more than \$9 million to more than 580 organizations in Middle Tennessee," said Jay Sanders, MTEMC community relations coordinator. "The great part about that giving is all of that money and all of those organizations are local."

Unlike some charitable foundations, 100 percent of member donations to SharingChange is given back to organizations in MTEMC's four-county service territory.

"Those donations went to help build homes through local Habitat for Humanity chapters, educate local youth on the importance of being compassionate through antibullying

campaigns and even provide transportation to hospitals for ill children," said Sanders.

While many members have made the commitment to join SharingChange, there are a number of members who are not yet participating.

"When we launched SharingChange, we basically started fresh," said Sanders.

The easiest way to know if you are participating in the program is to look at your bill. If you're not being billed an even dollar, you're most likely not participating.

"Rounding your bill up is the easiest way to participate," said Sanders. "But there are other ways. If you'd rather add a fixed amount to your monthly bill, you can do that, or you can even do both: round up and add a fixed amount."

Members who decide to only round up their bill donate, on aver-

age, \$6 per year, or about 50 cents each month. While that alone may not be a large sum, collectively the donations make a big impact.

"You, our membership, have helped grant wishes, provide meals for children who otherwise would go without and establish safe places for victims of domestic violence," Sanders said. "We know you care about your communities just like we do, and we invite you to join us in our commitment to those communities."

For more information or to sign up, visit www.SharingChange.org.

To start your participation in the program, fill out the card attached in the magazine (the postage is already paid, so no stamp is required) and drop it in the mail. Or, if you still aren't sure, give us a call at 1-877-777-9020, and we can walk you through the sign-up process.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

sharing change
THE POWER OF COMMUNITY

SharingChange.org

ABSOLUTELY THE EASIEST GOOD THING YOU'LL EVER DO.

- 1** Join SharingChange online at www.SharingChange.org, choose the option on your paper bill, mail-in a reply card or call 1-877-777-9020. **CLICK, MAIL OR CALL**
- 2** **SHARE YOUR CHANGE** Choose your giving. We'll round your bill up to the nearest dollar each month and you can choose to share a little more.
- 3** Lots of members, donating small amounts means we can have a bigger impact! **ADDS UP TO BIG IMPACT**
- 4** **100%** **550+** **GOOD THINGS**
100% of donations have been granted to any of the more than 550 local non-profit organizations helping people, pets and the planet.

COOPERATIVE SOLAR

SOLAR MADE SIMPLE BY MTEMC



With the construction of its first Cooperative Solar project in College Grove, Middle Tennessee Electric has added a new chapter to its history of serving its members.

The 1 megawatt array construction was completed in November 2016, and plans to offer program participation are expected to be available to the membership this month.

“Just as 80 years ago we were built to serve, today, we are taking the steps to broaden those service capabilities to our members,” said Chris Jones MTEMC President/CEO.

The Cooperative Solar Project provides access to members who might not otherwise be able to own and install their own solar electricity generation. Obstacles like improper roof orientation, excessive roof shading, restrictive subdivision covenants or landlord prohibitions are often barriers homeowners and renters who want to install solar systems face.

“It is our goal to be the solar leader among electric companies in the Tennessee Valley,” said Jones. “Last year, working with our members, we connected more solar generation than any other power distributor across the seven states of the Tennessee Valley.”

Interested members will be able to enroll in the program and, for a \$20 participation fee per energy block per month, they will have their portion of the local, green-generated power applied to their bills. In some months, electricity generated by the solar array may be less than the monthly participation cost, and in others it may exceed that cost. Members wanting solar will have the opportunity to participate with ease, letting their cooperative handle all the details.

“As a member-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperative, we exist to serve our members,” Jones said. “This is just one more way we can do that.”

There are a number of advantages the Cooperative Solar program brings:



WKRN News 2 interviews MTEMC President/CEO Chris Jones on the importance of the Cooperative Solar Project in College Grove and what it will bring to the membership of MTEMC.

- Middle Tennessee Electric operates and maintains the facility.
- Economies of scale bring costs down.
- No holes are made in your roof.
- There are no solar siting issues (roof direction, shading, etc.).
- Renters can participate.
- Homeowners under restrictive covenants can participate.

For more information on the program, or to sign up, visit www.mtemc.com/CooperativeSolar.



Middle Tennessee Electric board members and leadership are joined by dignitaries from across Williamson County and the state to cut the ribbon on the cooperative's first Cooperative Solar Project, located in College Grove.



ABOVE: Tennessee Commissioner of Environment and Conservation Bob Martineau speaks to the audience of more than 80 people at the ribbon-cutting on MTEM's Cooperative Solar project.



RIGHT: Williamson County Mayor Rogers Anderson thanks MTEM's President/CEO Chris Jones for the cooperative's efforts to bring local, clean, renewable energy to the area.

Planting roots in local schools

Middle Tennessee Electric is set to resume the TreeWise program at local schools across Williamson, Rutherford, Cannon and Wilson counties. Beginning in February, students will begin to learn about the importance of planting trees.

“We want to continue on the successes of this program,” said Talley Floyd, vegetation management supervisor for MTEM. “Stressing the importance of properly placing trees away from power lines and encouraging students to preserve them not only teaches them about the environment but also teaches them how to make a difference.”

Throughout February, students will learn more about trees from MTEM arborists through in-class activities and discussions that focus on transporting, planting and caring for trees.

“As in past years, each student will receive a folder with information on vegetation management around power lines and the important role trees play in our environment,” said Floyd.

Highlighted during the discussions are a history of trees and tree fossils, the creation and celebration of Arbor Day and some of the valuable things trees provide such as shade, oxygen, food, wood and paper products.

“By the end of the day, students will have a better understanding of trees, but they will also have a better understanding of why MTEM encourages planting certain trees around power lines and outside the right of way,” Floyd added.



Students are also given saplings to take home and plant with their families.

“It’s a fun family project,” said Floyd. “Students get to pass along the knowledge they learned in class while they are planting trees that can last for years.”

For details on the TreeWise program, call 877-414-7685 or email VegetationManagement@mtmc.com.

MTEM to award 10 scholarships in 2017

Middle Tennessee Electric’s SharingChange program will fund 10 scholarships — each for \$2,000 — for students in the cooperative’s service area again this year.

“We’re excited about the success of this program and look forward to seeing these funds put toward such a deserving cause again this year,” SharingChange Board Chairman Doretha Wright said. “The scholarship program enhances the education outreach of our SharingChange initiative.”

To receive a scholarship, candidates must be MTEM members or children of MTEM members and use the scholarship monies to attend two- or four-year accredited colleges or trade schools in Tennessee.

Anyone interested must fill out an application and complete a one-page essay on how the scholarship funds will benefit his or her personal goals. The essay should be typed and double-spaced on white paper. Essays will

Restrictions

Recipients must be MTEM members or dependents of MTEM members. Scholarship funds must be used to attend a Tennessee two- or four-year accredited college or trade school.

Deadline

Submit scholarship essays and applications by Wednesday, March 15. Scholarship winners will be notified July 20-24.

be judged by a group of volunteer teachers from the Middle Tennessee Electric service area.

“One of the cooperative’s seven principles is a commitment to education,” MTEM Community Relations Coordinator Jay Sanders said. “This is just another way we contribute to our membership and assist with our education outreach.”

Scholarship applicants will be judged on a point system that includes a financial needs assessment, current grade-point average, involvement in community service, leadership roles and an essay score. At least one of the 10 scholarships will be awarded in

each district.

The deadline for submitting scholarship essays and applications is Wednesday, March 15. Scholarship winners will be announced in July.

For more information on the scholarships, contact Jay Sanders at 615-494-1065 or visit www.mtmc.com.

SharingChange Spotlight



Make a difference! Visit www.SharingChange.org today!



Wilson County Christmas for All

"This holiday season will be a little brighter for those in need in our community, thanks to the generosity of the members of Middle Tennessee Electric," said Christmas for All President Alan Ricketts. "We appreciate the years of partnering with SharingChange." Wilson County Christmas for All provides toys for children at Christmas and food baskets for elderly and disabled residents.

NOVEMBER GRANTS

Community Helpers of Rutherford County

Rutherford County - \$1,000

Greenhouse Ministries

Rutherford County - \$1,000

Wilson County Christmas for All

Wilson County - \$10,000

Country K-9 Rescue

Wilson County - \$3,500

Wilson County CASA Inc.

Wilson County - \$1,000

TOTAL GRANTS:

\$16,500.00

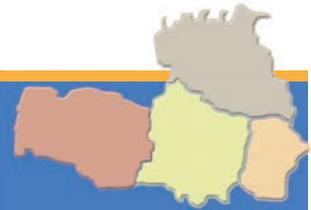
SharingChange is a foundation created by Middle Tennessee EMC's board of directors for the sole purpose of giving back to the communities served by the cooperative. Funds granted by the foundation come directly from members and are then used in the county where they are collected.

"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 \$9 million to more than 580 organizations in our communities. For more information, visit our website at www.SharingChange.org.

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

November grants by county



WILLIAMSON

\$0

Beginning balance -\$382.00
Incoming **\$13,665.43**
 Funds Available \$13,283.43
 Ending balance* ... \$13,283.43

WILSON

\$14,500

Beginning balance \$109,700.11
Incoming **\$8,890.06**
 Funds Available \$118,590.17
 Ending balance* .. \$104,090.17

RUTHERFORD

\$2,000

Beginning balance .. \$11,393.48
Incoming **\$10,837.94**
 Funds Available \$22,231.42
 Ending balance* ... \$20,231.42

CANNON

\$0

Beginning balance ... \$1,178.66
Incoming **\$1,606.57**
 Funds Available \$2,785.23
 Ending balance* \$2,785.23

*Ending balance is awaiting future grant applications.

KIM IS DOING THE EASIEST GOOD THING SHE WILL EVER DO.

You can, too. For pennies a month, you can support hundreds of local, nonprofit organizations through SharingChange and Middle Tennessee Electric.



LOCAL

GIVING TO LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS SERVING YOUR COMMUNITIES.

100%

EVERY PENNY OF THE MONEY RAISED IS GIVEN OUT IN GRANTS.

550+

OVER 550 LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS HAVE RECEIVED GRANTS.

Join now at SharingChange.org



Middle Tennessee Electric
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Middle Tennessee Electric

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

dish

\$39⁹⁹
Per Month

TV Price Guaranteed For 2 Years

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay.

SAVE A BUNDLE

DISH TV Service
+ High-Speed Internet

Prices starting at:

\$14⁹⁵

Restrictions apply. Subject to availability.

New Year's Resolution: **STOP** paying for channels you don't watch!

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◆ **First Channel Pack INCLUDED,**
additional Channel Packs start at only **\$6/mo.**

Action Channel Pack	Variety Channel Pack	Kids Channel Pack	Locals Channel Pack
... and many more!	... and many more!	... and many more!	... and many more!

FREE **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 **for life**

FOR A LIMITED TIME! Add the new **Hopper 3** for only \$10/mo. more. Watch and record up to 16 shows at once. Hopper upgrade fee may apply.

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All calls with InfinityDISH are monitored and recorded for quality assurance and training purposes. Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. Qualification: Advertised price requires credit qualification and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 1/16/17. 2-Year Commitment: Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$39.99 advertised price: Flex Pack plus one add-on Pack, HD service fees, and equipment for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$54.99 advertised price: America's Top 120 Plus programming package, Local channels and Regional Sports Networks (where available), HD service fees, and equipment for 1 TV. Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost: Programming package upgrades (\$54.99 for AT120+, \$49.99 for AT200, \$74.99 for AT250), monthly fees for additional receivers (\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15) and monthly DVR service fees (\$10). NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change): Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), Protection Plan, and transactional fees. Premium Channels: Subject to credit qualification. After 3 mos., you will be billed \$60/mo. for HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, Starz and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. Other: All packages, programming, features, and functionality are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., you will be billed \$8/mo. for Protection Plan unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. 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. 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 C.P.D. Reg. No. T.S. R1903.



January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

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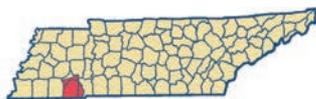
A Healthier New Year



Pickwick Electric Cooperative



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



**672 Highway 142
P.O. Box 49
Selmer, TN 38375**

**Phone Numbers:
731-645-3411
731-632-3333
1-800-372-8258**

**Outage Hotline:
1-866-260-4025**

**Web site:
www.pickwickec.com**

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

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong

message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of

consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure, especially transmission lines and access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy.

Elected officials will be making decisions

affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at Pickwick Electric Cooperative, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key



John Bowers

*President,
Pickwick Electric
Cooperative
jbowers@pickwick-electric.com*

agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and

affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

Happy New Year from Pickwick Electric Cooperative

Holiday Closing

*The PEC office will be closed on
Monday, Jan. 16, in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.*

Employees recognized for safe driving



Morris Carothers
30 years



Jerry Boyette
20 years



Lori Perry
15 years



Josh Coats
10 years



Tim Jones
10 years



Adam Mitchell
10 years

To be eligible for safe driving awards, employees must meet the requirements outlined by the National Safety Council. These rules are followed in determining the number of years of safe driving, and PEC policy determines the award. Those employees receiving safe driving awards

this year are Morris Carothers, meter order man, 30 years; Jerry Boyette, mechanic, 20 years; Lori Perry, customer service representative, 15 years; Josh Coats, engineering aide, 10 years; Tim Jones, lineman, 10 years; Adam Mitchell, engineering aide, 10 years. They have a total of 95 years of safe driving.

Jackson celebrates 50th employment anniversary

The board of directors, attorney and employees of Pickwick Electric Cooperative would like to congratulate Bill Jackson for completing 50 years of employment on Nov. 7.

This is a milestone no other employee has accomplished. Jackson started his career with the right-of-way crew, moved to the meter reader position, advanced to meter order man and is currently supervisor of consumer records and accounts. At the annual employee Christmas luncheon, he was presented a plaque recognizing him for his dedication and service to the cooperative.



Bill Jackson

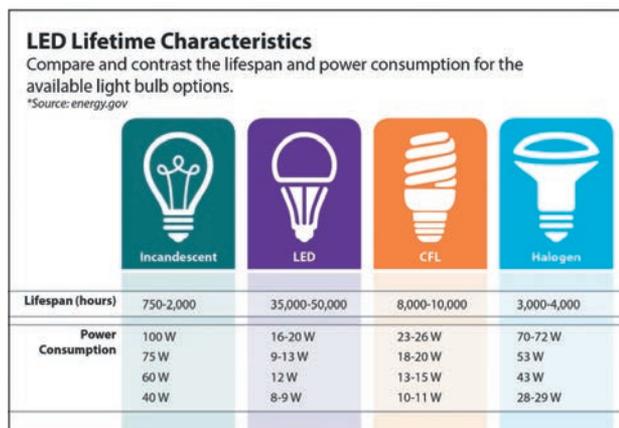
Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb. And you don't ever need to change the bulbs. In 50 years, when the fixture wears out, you'll replace the whole unit.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both the fan and a light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the

LED Lifetime Characteristics
Compare and contrast the lifespan and power consumption for the available light bulb options.
*Source: energy.gov



	Incandescent	LED	CFL	Halogen
Lifespan (hours)	750-2,000	35,000-50,000	8,000-10,000	3,000-4,000
Power Consumption	100 W 75 W 60 W 40 W	16-20 W 9-13 W 12 W 8-9 W	23-26 W 18-20 W 13-15 W 10-11 W	70-72 W 53 W 43 W 28-29 W

overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.

4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.

Does Rover really need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.

A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.
- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

Digital devices impact energy use

By Tom Tate

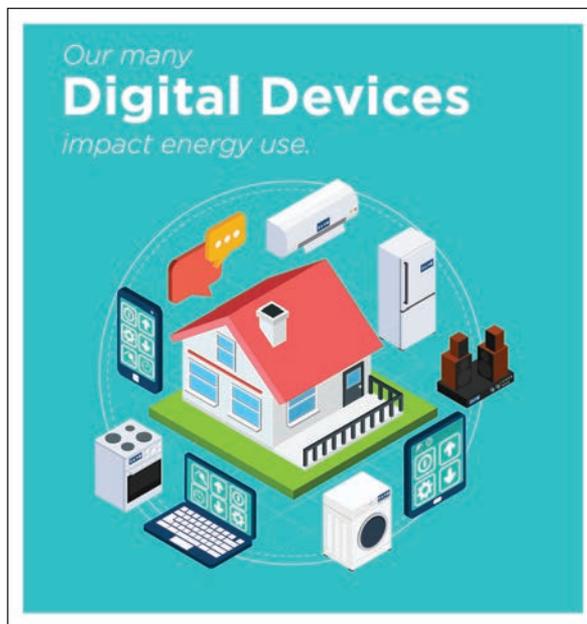
Ah, the Digital Age. We have gadgets galore, the ability to manage our homes in new and innovative ways, brilliant images and captivating sounds of modern entertainment options and, of course, the internet. Clearly, digital devices reign supreme. Yet these cool new capabilities come with a couple of pitfalls: vampire loads and the issue of “technology reincarnation.”

Over the course of the Digital Age, electricity use has continued to increase. Families have multiple televisions. Computer prices have plummeted, meaning many homes now have multiple computers. Everyone in the family needs a cell phone. Gaming consoles and set-top cable/satellite boxes satisfy our desire for entertainment.

Major appliances aside, most digital devices do not use 120-volt power, which is the standard voltage of a home outlet. They actually use a lot less. So, trying to plug your brand new smartphone directly into an outlet is going to lead to a fried device and lots of tears from someone. This is why low-voltage devices come with a power adapter. These “wall warts,” as some term them, take the 120-volt electricity supplied by Pickwick Electric Cooperative and convert it to, say, 5 volts. Unfortunately, most folks leave their adapters plugged in to make recharging easier. The problem with this approach is that the seemingly innocuous wall wart uses power even when it isn’t charging a device.

This invisible energy consumption is often called “vampire load.” Studies show that 5 to 10 percent of the average home’s energy use is from vampire loads. The only way to stop this is to unplug the power adapter when it is not in use or employ smart power strips, which look like the typical power strip but with a twist — only one socket gets power all the time. When the device or appliance connected to the live outlet turns on and starts using power, the remaining sockets receive power, too. This is perfect for entertainment systems, computer setups and a variety of other situations.

Technological advances have steadily increased energy efficiency and reduced purchase prices. This seems like a



good thing. Unfortunately, when replacing a product at the end of its life, the tendency is to go bigger or continue to use the old technology. This is the second “reincarnation” issue I noted.

For example, flat-screen television prices have plummeted as technology has evolved — and so has the amount of electricity they use. Consumers wander into the big-box store and are dazzled by walls of giant, brilliant televisions. What they used to pay for the paltry 32-inch model now might net them a 50-inch giant. And who doesn’t want to see their

favorite show or sports event in near-lifesize? But if you spring for the bigger TV, you won’t benefit from the increased energy efficiency of the newer technology. The bigger model uses as much juice as the older, smaller TV, which likely ends up in another room (reincarnated in another setting), still using power.

Or refrigerators: These are the showpieces of the evolution of smart appliances. Many new models include touchscreens and cameras; they communicate over the internet while keeping food cold and making ice. Yet what often happens is the old refrigerator ends up in the basement or garage, reincarnated as a dedicated beverage unit or overflow.

I’ll offer a couple of words of advice to help you avoid — or at least reduce — the effects of vampire loads and technology reincarnation. Invest in smart power strips or make a point to use outlets where you can conveniently unplug power adapters when not in use. Don’t oversize your replacement appliances and entertainment gear unless family needs dictate the larger capacities. And recycle the replaced appliances and equipment to stem technology reincarnation. You will enjoy the Digital Age for a lot less.

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.

Attention: teachers!

PEC offers Energy Right Solutions for Youth Program

The Energy Right Solutions for Youth Program, developed by a team of local power companies and representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority and Tennessee Valley Public Power Association, was designed as an educational outreach service for educators with lesson plans intended for public, private, STEM and home schools as well as community groups. It aligns with state learning standards for math, science and reading, aiming to help children in third through fifth grades learn about the environment and how to use energy wisely. Third, fourth and fifth grades were chosen because at this age, a child's desire to share school experiences with parents/guardians is high, as is the adults' willingness to participate in his or her child's education. The child's engagement is also maximized at this age due in part to limited sports team and club participation and involvement in other extracurricular activities that typically occurs in upper grades.

Energy Right Solutions for Youth lesson plans comply with state learning standards for the seven

states served by TVA for grades three, four and five. Applicable state learning standards are listed on each lesson plan along with recommendations for the amount of time to spend covering certain parts of a given lesson, depending on the size of the group. In addition, each lesson plan lists needed materials if the educator elects to engage a group in recommended experiments.



The lesson plans cover three areas — Energy Fundamentals, Forms of Energy and Energy Use and Delivery — and were developed for teachers, parents and group leaders. They were designed to help students gain age-appropriate, informed views on energy and how to use it wisely in language that is easy to understand. Lesson plans can be “mixed and matched” to meet specific course objectives and can be used multiple times over the course of an entire academic year.

“Using energy wisely is of more importance now than ever before,” says PEC President John Bowers. “We are excited to be a part of this educational program and hope that our local teachers, parents and civic group leaders will take advantage of it.”

To view the lesson plans, visit www.pickwick.com and click on myCommunity, School and Community Programs and Energy Right Solutions for Youth. For more details, call PEC at 731-645-3411 and ask for Kevin Roy, PEC energy advisor, or Beverly Lambert, human resources/communications coordinator.

Energy Efficiency
Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!
Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	JANUARY Turn off lights when you leave a room.	FEBRUARY Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.	MARCH Turn off water while brushing your teeth.
APRIL Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.	MAY Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.	JUNE Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.	
	JULY Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.	AUGUST Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.	SEPTEMBER Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.
OCTOBER Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.	NOVEMBER Take short showers instead of baths.	DECEMBER Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.	

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THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



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

JoAnn Dillingham,
Director of Accounting and Finance

Gary Hatfield,
Director of Special Projects

Charles "Bo" Goodin,
Assistant General Manager

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.

You also can contact us via email: info@pve.coop

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Judith Robertson, Secretary-Treasurer

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Allen Parkey

Gary Russell

Mikel Sharp

Michael Shockley

Dr. John Short

AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Happy New Year!

As we stand on the threshold of a new year, we welcome the opportunities it can bring. It is a time to reflect and think about what the past year has brought and what exciting things the new year will bring. It is a time to stop and examine our priorities, values and goals. Our focus is still the same: to provide you with dependable electric service at the lowest cost possible.

We try to keep you as informed as possible about the operations of your cooperative. This is why each year we provide to you Powell Valley Electric Cooperative's most recently audited financial statement. Just as the cost for your family ex-

penses has risen over the years, so has the cost of doing business for the cooperative. We are pleased to say that your cooperative is financially sound. We want to assure you that management continues to operate the cooperative in a manner that reflects the financial stability that is shown in the financial statement.

So as you start to make your plans for the new year, remember

that we still have the same mission as we do each year: to keep your electric service reliable and affordable. As a new chapter begins, we wish you and your family a happy, healthy and joyous new year.

— Randell W. Meyers



Randell W. Meyers
General Manager/CEO
Powell Valley
Electric Cooperative

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

2017 VMDAEC Education Scholarship deadline

The deadline for submitting an application for the 2017 Electric Cooperative Education Scholarship is Friday, Feb. 10, 2017. All supporting documents must be post-marked no later than midnight, Feb. 10. Any high school or home-school senior graduating in 2017 whose parents or guardians are consumer-members of Powell Valley Electric Cooperative and whose pri-

mary residence is served by the cooperative is eligible to apply. This scholarship will be awarded by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives Education Scholarship Foundation Board. If assistance is needed with any part of this application process, contact Nina Jacobs, manager of administrative services, at scholarship@vmdaec.com or call 804-968-4084.

A friendly reminder

We are continuously looking for ways to help our members. With today's hustle and bustle of life, there is always a chance that we might forget a few things here or there. Now, you don't ever have to worry about forgetting when your electric bill is due. You have the option of signing up to receive alerts and reminders free of charge by email, text message and/or a voice message.

You can receive the following and other alerts:

1. Due-date reminder
2. Past-due reminder
3. Payment confirmation

If you would like to start receiving these alerts, our customer service representatives will be glad to assist you. Call your local Powell Valley Electric Cooperative office or visit us at www.pve.coop.

Why electric bills go up in winter

Since heating accounts for the biggest portion of electric bills, we would expect those with electric heat or space heaters to have higher electric bills during the cold months.

But other factors also add to increased energy use.

1. Because there is less daylight, more people are inside using lights and electronics.
2. Most heating systems require electricity in some way, and they may run constantly in extremely cold weather.
3. We tend to use clothes dryers more in the winter.
4. We watch more TV in winter.
5. We do more cooking for the holidays.
6. Indoor and outdoor holiday decorations are used more in winter.
7. There are more people in the house. Kids are home from school or college all day, and friends and relatives stop by, meaning more water, lights and electronics are used.

Powell Valley Electric Cooperative Financial Statement

Balance Sheet for the year ended June 30

The cooperative's annual audit has been completed, and we are proud to share with you the most recent audited financial statement.

	2015	2016	\$ Change	% Change
ASSETS				
Electric plant				
Electric plant in service	114,661,506	117,791,949	3,130,443	2.7%
Construction work in progress	701,165	1,442,883	741,718	105.8%
Total plant	115,362,671	119,234,832	3,872,161	3.4%
Less: accumulated depreciation	(54,089,668)	(56,931,422)	(2,841,754)	5.3%
Electric plant — net	61,273,003	62,303,410	1,030,407	1.7%
Investments				
CFC capital term certificates	1,127,744	1,127,744	-	0.0%
Capital in associated organizations	10,420	10,420	-	0.0%
Economic development loans	2,851,107	2,562,380	(288,727)	-10.1%
Investments — subtotal	3,989,271	3,700,544	(288,727)	-7.2%
Current assets				
Cash and temporary cash investments	9,477,512	9,730,153	252,641	2.7%
Accounts receivable consumers (net)	3,267,558	3,036,138	(231,420)	-7.1%
Material and supplies	530,282	453,653	(76,629)	-14.5%
Prepaid expenses	199,034	629,206	430,172	216.1%
Other current assets	1,904,054	2,128,519	224,465	11.8%
Current assets — subtotal	15,378,440	15,977,669	599,229	3.9%
Other assets and deferred debits				
TVA heat pump loans receivable	2,731,639	2,486,890	(244,749)	-9.0%
Other loans receivable	591,464	416,280	(175,184)	-29.6%
Pension prepayment	1,216,184	1,054,026	(162,158)	-13.3%
Deferred GIS field inventory cost	386,672	360,894	(25,778)	-6.7%
Deferred fiber communications	244,000	232,000	(12,000)	-4.9%
Subtotal — Other assets/def. debits	5,169,959	4,550,090	(619,869)	-12.0%
Total assets	85,810,673	86,531,713	721,040	0.8%
LIABILITIES, EQUITIES AND MARGINS				
Equities and margins				
Memberships	119,660	120,060	400	0.3%
Accumulated net margins	57,066,137	61,190,849	4,124,712	7.2%
Equities and margins — subtotal	57,185,797	61,310,909	4,125,112	7.2%
Long-term debt				
Rural Utilities Service (RUS)	19,515,459	20,506,631	991,172	5.1%
RUS advance payments	(16,799,736)	(17,934,066)	(1,134,330)	6.8%
CoBank	2,227,733	1,780,540	(447,193)	-20.1%
Economic development loans	3,151,107	2,862,380	(288,727)	-9.2%
Long-term debt — net	8,094,563	7,215,485	(879,078)	-10.9%
Current liabilities				
Accounts payable — purchased power	6,570,992	6,151,665	(419,327)	-6.4%
Accounts payable — other	436,363	426,551	(9,812)	-2.2%
Consumer security deposits	899,916	980,382	80,466	8.9%
Accrued expenses	374,192	391,851	17,659	4.7%
Tax accruals and payroll deductions	2,000,861	2,014,494	13,633	0.7%
Current liabilities — subtotal	10,282,324	9,964,943	(317,381)	-3.1%
Other liabilities and deferred credits				
Post-retirement benefits	7,443,574	5,483,577	(1,959,997)	-26.3%
TVA heat pump loans payable	2,804,415	2,556,799	(247,616)	-8.8%
Other liabilities/def. credits — subtotal	10,247,989	8,040,376	(2,207,613)	-21.5%
Total liabilities, equities and margins	85,810,673	86,531,713	721,040	0.8%

Powell Valley Electric Cooperative

Comparative Income Statement for the year ended June 30

	2015	2016	\$ Change	% Change
REVENUE				
Electric sales				
Residential	36,235,367	33,412,489	(2,822,878)	-7.8%
Small commercial	4,949,616	4,728,479	(221,137)	-4.5%
Large commercial	16,401,033	15,840,905	(560,128)	-3.4%
Street and outdoor lighting	1,453,559	1,429,951	(23,608)	-1.6%
Electric sales — subtotal	59,039,575	55,411,824	(3,627,751)	-6.1%
Other income				
Miscellaneous consumer income	443,449	463,912	20,463	4.6%
Rent from electric properties	1,273,549	1,262,048	(11,501)	-0.9%
Rent from TVA transmission line	252,444	-	(252,444)	-100.0%
Generator revenue — TVA	731,987	731,781	(206)	-0.0%
Interest/patronage income	868,968	1,087,209	218,241	25.1%
Other income — subtotal	3,570,397	3,544,950	(25,447)	-0.7%
TOTAL REVENUE	62,609,972	58,956,774	(3,653,198)	-5.8%
EXPENSE				
Power cost				
Power cost	47,022,754	43,292,598	(3,730,156)	-7.9%
Power credits	(527,436)	(645,018)	(117,582)	22.3%
Power cost — net	46,495,318	42,647,580	(3,847,738)	-8.3%
Operations and maintenance				
Transmission/generation expense	179,445	120,098	(59,347)	-33.1%
Distribution expense	6,478,395	6,118,242	(360,153)	-5.6%
Administrative expense	3,141,747	3,181,126	39,379	1.3%
Operations and maintenance — subtotal	9,799,587	9,419,466	(380,121)	-3.9%
Other deductions				
Depreciation	3,847,695	3,908,875	61,180	1.6%
Interest — LTD	830,889	840,127	9,238	1.1%
Other expense	3,141	4,612	1,471	46.8%
Other deductions — subtotal	4,681,725	4,753,614	71,889	1.5%
TOTAL EXPENSE	60,976,630	56,820,660	(4,155,970)	-6.8%
Net operating income	1,633,342	2,136,114	502,772	30.8%
Net non-operating income	1,998,755	1,988,598	(10,157)	-0.5%
Net income	3,632,097	4,124,712	492,615	13.6%

Facts about your cooperative as of June 30, 2016

Number of customers

Residential	25,978
Small commercial	5,153
Large commercial	210
Outdoor lighting	194
Total customers	31,535

Miles of line

Distribution	3,541
Transmission	33
Total miles of line	3,574

Customers per mile of line

	8.9
--	------------

Number of full-time employees

	55
--	-----------

Counties served

<u>Counties served</u>	<u>Number of customers</u>
Tennessee	
Claiborne	15,546
Grainger	1,024
Hancock	4,595
Hawkins	503
Union	1,746
Subtotal — Tennessee	23,414
Virginia	
Lee	6,858
Scott	1,253
Wise	10
Subtotal — Virginia	8,121
Total customers	31,535
Property tax paid	\$ 647,518

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool houses.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The wasted heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.energyright.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both a fan and light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!

Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Turn off lights when you leave a room.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p>Turn off water while brushing your teeth.</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.</p>	
	<p>JULY</p> <p>Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Take short showers instead of baths.</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.</p>	

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THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation

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AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As co-ops reach out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure, especially transmission lines and access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency

of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations with U.S. Rep. David Kustoff and

State Rep. Ron Gant, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians like State Rep. Jimmy Eldridge of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!



Kevin Murphy
President,
Southwest Tennessee Electric
Membership Corporation

Southwest's 24th substation now on-line

By Tina Morris, STEMC Communications and Community Outreach Specialist

On Nov. 3, Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation officially energized and placed a new substation in service. The facility, located at 339 Watlington Road in South Jackson, was built at a cost of \$4 million and will serve approximately 2,500 member-owners in South Jackson, Medon, Pinson and surrounding communities. The new addition will allow STEMC to retire two existing substations and avoid costly ongoing maintenance to the older equipment. The Watlington Road facility replaces the Perry Switch Road substation, which was built in 1951, and the Medon substation, built in 1995. The transformers from the Medon substation were from a pre-existing station and date back to the 1930s.

STEMC is thankful for the opportunity to upgrade equipment in order to provide our members higher-quality service by distributing power more efficiently and effectively. We are proud of the latest addition to our fleet of substations, and we look forward to serving our members with safe, reliable and affordable electricity many years into the future.

**339 WATLINGTON ROAD**

**Southwest Tennessee Electric
Membership Corporation**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

WATLINGTON ROAD SUBSTATION

IF AN EMERGENCY, FOUND OPEN, OR UNLOCKED CALL
1-888-440-1990
www.stemc.com



Southwest Tennessee EMC's newest substation at 339 Watlington Road in South Jackson.



On hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony are, from left, STEMC Vice President of Engineering Billy Gordon, Madison County Mayor Jimmy Harris, TVA's Tori Lester, special guest Noah Caldwell and STEMC board members Audrey Blue, Hugh Harvey Sr. and Jackie Butler.



Distribution Engineer Mike Russell, left, looks on as Board Member Hugh Harvey Sr. "flips the switch" to energize the newest STEMC substation.

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, contact Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation at 800-772-0472.

Anne Prince writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, service arm of the nation's 900-plus electric cooperatives.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

Light up your world with outdoor lighting

By Marilyn Means, STEMC Marketing and Energy Services Coordinator

Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation is proud to work with businesses and organizations in our service area to provide outdoor lighting applications for sports fields, parking areas, car dealerships, storefronts, subdivisions and residential dwellings. Outdoor lighting increases visibility and improves safety, and STEMC lighting specialists are available to assist members with their outdoor lighting needs.

Representatives from the Tennessee Valley Authority or STEMC will visit a site and consult with the member to develop a plan that meets the needs while fitting into his or her budget. There is no charge to our members for this consultation.

Contact your local office or Marilyn Means at 731-585-0541 or Tina Morris at 731-585-0543 or visit our website, www.stemc.com, for additional information.



Flood light (above)
Security light (below)



New LED street lighting is being tested in Stanton.

To connect and serve

On Nov. 15, Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation hosted its 22nd community meeting since 2012. Meetings like this latest one held at Madison County Fire Department on Christmasville Road are designed to educate our members about various aspects of the co-op and share valuable information that may save you money and help you live more comfortably. We also answer questions and hear concerns, all in an ef-

fort to connect with our members in order to better serve their needs.

In 2017, we will be holding three community meetings throughout the service area as well as our annual meeting at the Jackson Fairgrounds on Friday, Aug. 11. We hope you will be able to join STEMC employees and the marketing team as we present information about energy efficiency during next year's series of community meetings.



Journeyman Lineman Mark Holmes shows members at a community meeting various pieces of equipment used to maintain power lines.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

You will never know

By Billy Gordon, *STEMC Vice President of Engineering*, and Tina Morris, *STEMC Communications and Community Outreach Specialist*

Here at Southwest Tennessee Electric, we are constantly working to improve service for our members. In the month of November, we took advantage of great temperatures that afforded a window of opportunity to make such improvements. After months of planning and hard work by our crews, STEMC removed two substations from the grid for maintenance and upgrades.

First, the Drummonds Substation, which serves many members in western Tipton County, was temporarily removed from service. Over the last 10 months, STEMC has

made incremental improvements to help increase reliability. In the spring of 2016, STEMC installed new 161,000-volt switches. This fall, a new 161,000-volt breaker was installed. Currently, the substation is up and running, with the last planned improvements to occur in early spring 2017. Combining these incremental upgrades results in a finished product that will greatly increase reliability to members in the Drummonds area.

On the same day work started at Drummonds Substation, crews removed the Mason Substation from service. This facility is fed by a 69,000-volt transmission line, and many of STEMC's wooden transmission poles in this area have reached the end of their serviceable lives. As a result, STEMC is incrementally replacing older wooden transmission poles with new metal poles. Obviously, these metal poles are impervious to rot and pole-damaging



161,000-volt breaker is installed at the Drummonds Substation.

wildlife like woodpeckers. With these new metal poles in place, the Mason Substation will be back on the grid, providing safe, reliable and affordable electricity to our members.

Here at STEMC, if we do our job well, you as the member will never know. STEMC not only works hard to keep the lights on ... but these are small examples of projects endeavored to keep your lights from going out!



Line crews in the Mason area replace wooden transmission poles with new metal poles.



Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire. Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.
- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.



5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179



Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)

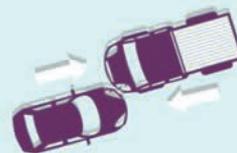


4X



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)



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**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



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97 Resource Road; P.O. Box 518,
Dunlap, TN 37327
Telephone — 423-949-2198

3396 Main St.; P.O. Box 441,
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Telephone — 423-447-2131

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Tracy City, TN 37387
Telephone — 931-592-2511

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Whitwell, TN 37397
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www.youtube.com/svalleyec

AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Your source for power and information

You pay your utility bill every month with Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative, and more than likely you think of yourself, “That’s done.” But, the truth is we’re more than just the utility provider you pay each month for electricity. Everyone at SVEC is committed to building even stronger connections with you and the local communities we serve. One of the ways we are delivering on this goal is by providing you with information, resources and services that are as reliable and useful as the electricity we supply. We want you to view Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative as your trusted energy partner and your first stop when you have a question about energy efficiency, renewable energy or other matters.

Recently, SVEC has looked at ways to make our services more efficient and valuable. Here are just a few of the ways we are sharing our energy expertise with you and leveraging the cooperative advantage to benefit every member:

- We help you keep energy use in check by providing energy-efficiency tips — visit www.svalleyec.com for a wide variety of energy information.
- When it comes to keeping you informed about your SVEC account, the information you need is at your fingertips. Just install the SVEC mobile app on your smartphone to keep up with your daily electric use, make a bill payment, report an outage and access other useful information and services.
- No one makes electrical safety more of a priority than SVEC, and we take this commitment a step further by providing electrical safety tools and tips to help keep you and your family safe in and around your home. You can also find

electrical safety information at www.svalleyec.com.

- When it comes to renewable energy, we are here to answer your questions about options in our region. You can trust SVEC to provide you with the latest unbiased information on renewable energy.

Membership in Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative is a powerful thing. It means we are owned by you — our members. It means you have an energy partner you can trust to look out for your community’s best interests, not its own bottom line.

When you have energy-related questions or needs or questions about your membership, we are ready to work with you. At the end of the day, that’s the cooperative advantage that allows us to be your community’s trusted partner and provide you with the electricity you need to power your daily life.

However, it is you, our members, who are the cooperative’s source of power. This year, we would like to celebrate a few individuals who are strengthening our communities with their leadership and devotion to making our hometowns better places to live and raise our families. To do this, we will be sponsoring a contest called “**Who Powers You?**” We will take nominations from our members each month, and beginning with the March issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*, we will feature one winner per month through December. Each winner will receive a \$100 cash prize, and at the end of the year, one overall winner will be recognized with a \$1,000 donation to the organization he or she supports.

Start thinking of those outstanding individuals who power your community with their selfless energy, and shine a light on their good deeds with your nomination. See page 21 for more information.



Mike Partin
SVEC CEO



Honor the person who powers you

Nominate someone
 who could
 win \$1,000
 for the organization he or she supports

Who Powers You?

At Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative, we spend a lot of time talking about electricity. But it's time to recognize an energy source that makes an even greater impact on our community: the power of human connections. While electricity brightens our homes, people brighten our days. While electricity fuels our workplaces, people fuel our dreams. **That is why we're launching a contest to honor inspirational members of our co-op communities.**

Who has made a positive difference in your life? Visit www.svalleyec.com to learn more about the contest and to make a nomination. Or complete the form on page 26 and mail it to #WhoPowersYou, SVEC, P.O. Box 31, South Pittsburg, TN 37380. Or drop completed forms by your local SVEC office. The person you nominate could win \$100 for him or herself and \$1,000 for the cause he or she supports.

Rules

1. Due date for nominations is the 20th of each month, January-October 2017. Nominations received after the

20th will be held for the next month. Those not recognized the month nominated will be considered in following months.

2. One nominee will be recognized in the March through December SVEC sections of *The Tennessee Magazine*. Each will receive a \$100 cash award
3. In April 2018, one of the 10 individuals will be named the overall winner and further recognized with a \$1,000 donation to the cause or civic organization of his or her choice. SVEC members will be allowed to vote for their favorite nominees in the competition for the overall winner. Details for voting will be announced at voting time.
4. All nominees and nominators must be members of Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative, at least 18 years of age and U.S. citizens or permanent legal residents.
5. Each SVEC member can nominate only one person.
6. SVEC employees and their immediate families are not allowed to participate in the contest or win contest prizes.

Winter's here! Are you ready?

Winter is officially here, and with it comes the threat of winter storms and the possibility of electrical outages due to high winds, iced power lines, fallen tree limbs and broken power poles. The best defense against these winter storms is a good offense — be prepared!

Make sure your home, vehicle and family are equipped for the possibility of an extended power outage.

Follow the tips in the accompanying checklist to assemble a home emergency kit. Consider preparing a similar kit for your vehicle.

To the right is a graphic depicting the electric distribution system and explaining the steps and the order in which repairs must be made to restore power following a widespread power outage.

Remember that it is very important to report any outage that might occur. Your information helps narrow down the source of the outage.

To simplify the process of reporting an outage and stay updated on the extent of the outage and the progress of the restoration, download the SVEC app for your smartphone. It is free and available in the App Store and from Google Play (see the ad on page 26).

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 of nonperishable, high-energy foods
- 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](https://www.redcross.org/domore) to learn more about disaster kits.

Powering Up

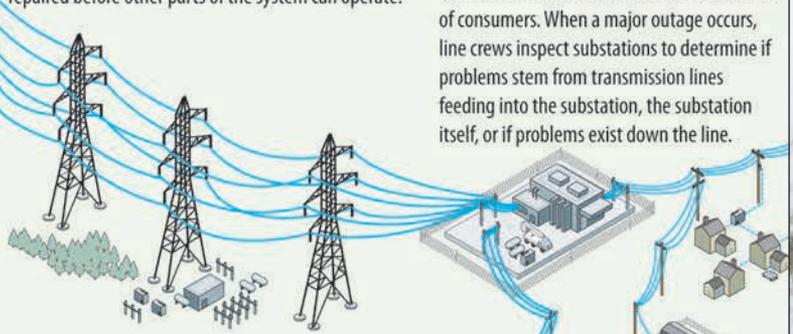
When electricity goes out, most of us expect power will be restored within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.

1 High-Voltage Transmission Lines

Transmission towers and cables that supply power to transmission substations (and thousands of members) rarely fail. But when damaged, these facilities must be repaired before other parts of the system can operate.

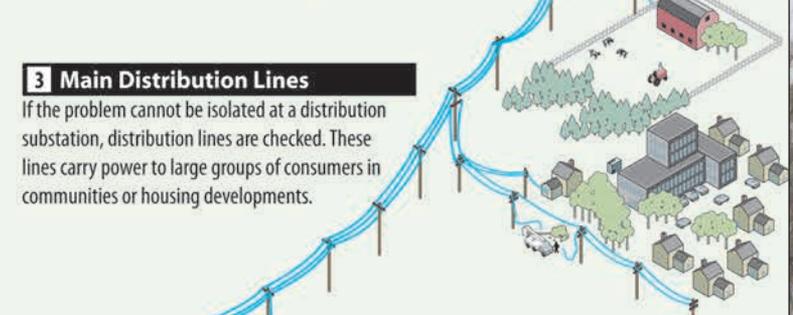
2 Distribution Substation

Each substation serves hundreds or thousands of consumers. When a major outage occurs, line crews inspect substations to determine if problems stem from transmission lines feeding into the substation, the substation itself, or if problems exist down the line.



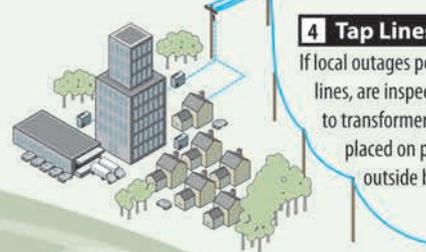
3 Main Distribution Lines

If the problem cannot be isolated at a distribution substation, distribution lines are checked. These lines carry power to large groups of consumers in communities or housing developments.



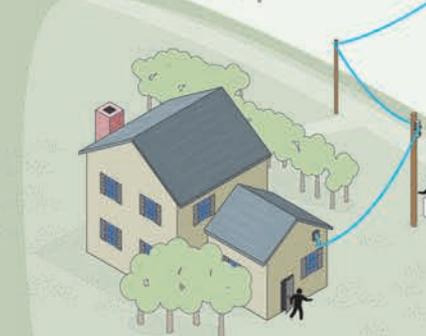
4 Tap Lines

If local outages persist, supply lines, called tap lines, are inspected. These lines deliver power to transformers, either mounted on poles or placed on pads for underground service, outside businesses, schools, and homes.



5 Individual Homes

If your home remains without power, the service line between a transformer and your residence may need to be repaired. Always call to report an outage to help line crews isolate local issues.



graphic by Funnel Inc.



Energy savings this season

SVEC — Your source of power. And energy-efficiency Information

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age

and condition of the home, and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Follow the tips below to improve the comfort and efficiency of your home.

Five tips for saving energy at home

1. Set your thermostat to 68 degrees in the winter and lower when no one is home. Installing a programmable thermostat can take the thought out of saving energy.
2. Adjust the temperature setting on your water heater to 120 degrees, and use less hot water.
3. Plug leaks around windows, doors and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
4. Limit the use of space heaters. Space heaters use a significant amount of energy and can greatly increase your heating costs.
5. Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes at www.svalleyec.com or with the free SVEC mobile app.

Stay connected to your co-op

Update your account information for:

- Instant pinpoint location
- Faster answers to your account questions
- Quicker deployment of line personnel
- Faster repair time
- Shorter outage duration for you

Update your account information and stay connected

Make the most of all that SVEC's technology has to offer. Update your SVEC account information today at www.svalleyec.com, on your SVEC mobile app or complete the form below and return it with your next bill payment.

Name on account: _____

Address: _____ **City:** _____

State: _____ **ZIP:** _____ **Acct. No.:** _____

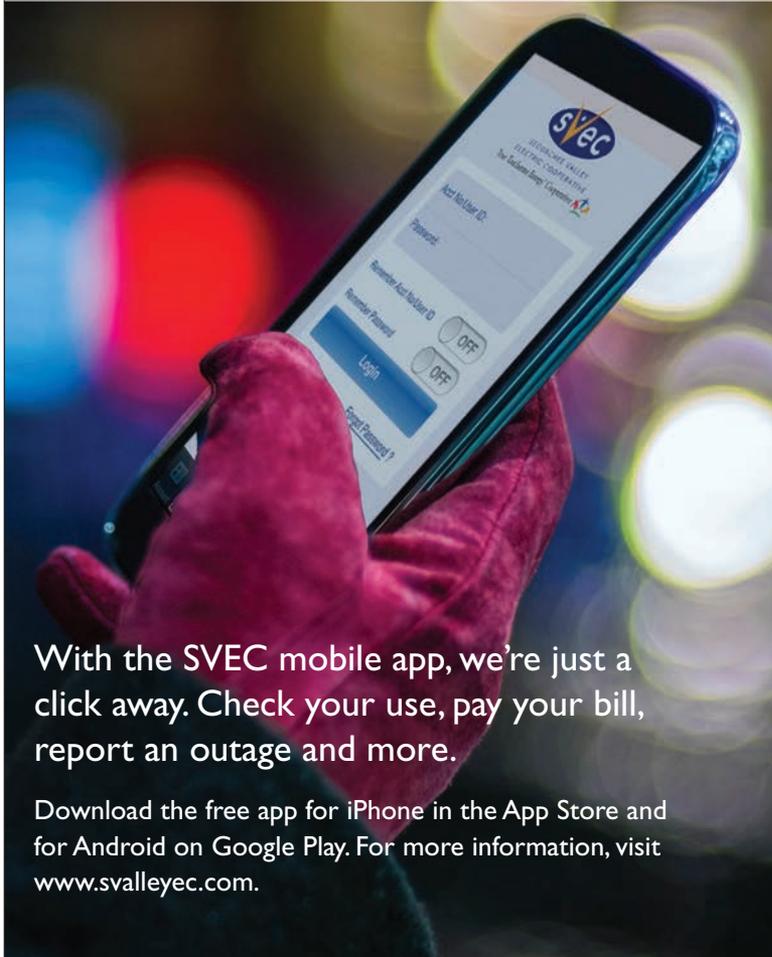
Home phone number: _____ **Cell phone number 1:** _____

Cell phone number 2: _____ **Cell phone number 3:** _____

Email address(es): _____

Return form with your next payment; mail to SVEC, P.O. Box 31, South Pittsburg, TN 37380; update your information online; or call your local SVEC office. SVEC does not share member information.

Take us with you
wherever you go



With the SVEC mobile app, we're just a click away. Check your use, pay your bill, report an outage and more.

Download the free app for iPhone in the App Store and for Android on Google Play. For more information, visit www.svalleyec.com.

SVEC Co-op Strong trivia contest

Thank you to all those who entered the November SVEC Co-op Strong contest. The correct answer to the November question, "What rare breed of pigs does the Keener family raise at Sequatchie Cove Farm?" is "**Gloucestershire old spot pigs.**" Congratulations to Charles Snyder of South Pittsburg, whose correct answer was drawn as the winner of a \$75 gift certificate for Sequatchie Cove Farm products.

Notice

All SVEC offices will be **CLOSED** Wednesday, Jan. 18, 2017 for employee training. In the event of an emergency or to make a bill payment, visit www.svalleyec.com or call 888-421-7832.

Who Powers You? nomination form

Name of person being nominated: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Your name (nominator): _____ SVEC account No.: _____

Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Write a short (one page or less) story giving examples of how this person inspires you and makes your community a better place to live — how he or she "powers your community." Return form with your story to your local SVEC office or mail to: SVEC — Who Powers You?, P.O. Box 31, South Pittsburg, TN 37380. Or complete the application online at www.svalleyec.com.

Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative

HONOR THE PERSON WHO POWERS YOU

For details, visit www.svalleyec.com.

dish

\$39.99
Per Month

**TV Price Guaranteed
For 2 Years**

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay.

SAVE A BUNDLE

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Prices starting at:

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Restrictions apply.
Subject to
availability.

New Year's Resolution:

STOP paying for channels you don't watch!

Start with **DISH's** most popular channels...



◆ **First Channel Pack INCLUDED,**
additional Channel Packs start at only **\$6/mo.**

Action Channel Pack	Variety Channel Pack	Kids Channel Pack	Locals Channel Pack
<p>... and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>... and many more!</p>	<p>... and many more!</p>

FREE **HBO** **CINEMAX** **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 **SHOWTIME** **STARZ**

FREE **HD** for life

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay.

FOR A LIMITED TIME!

Add the new **Hopper 3** for only \$10/mo. more. Watch and record up to 16 shows at once. Hopper upgrade fee may apply.

CALL NOW 1-844-792-5937

WWW.INFINITYDISH.COM

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OFFER ONLY GOOD FOR NEW DISH SUBSCRIBERS. • **SE HABLA ESPAÑOL**



All calls with InfinityDISH are monitored and recorded for quality assurance and training purposes. Offer for new and qualifying former customers only. **Qualification:** Advertised price requires credit qualification and eAutoPay. Upfront activation and/or receiver upgrade fees may apply based on credit qualification. Offer ends 1/16/17. **2-Year Commitment:** Early termination fee of \$20/mo. remaining applies if you cancel early. **Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$39.99 advertised price:** Flex Pack plus one add-on Pack, HD service fees, and equipment for 1 TV. **Included in 2-year price guarantee at \$54.99 advertised price:** America's Top 120 Plus programming package, Local channels and Regional Sports Networks (where available), HD service fees, and equipment for 1 TV. **Included in 2-year price guarantee for additional cost:** Programming package upgrades (\$54.99 for AT120+, \$49.99 for AT200, \$74.99 for AT250), monthly fees for additional receivers (\$7 per additional TV, receivers with additional functionality may be \$10-\$15) and monthly DVR service fees (\$10). **NOT included in 2-year price guarantee or advertised price (and subject to change):** Taxes & surcharges, add-on programming (including premium channels), Protection Plan, and transactional fees. **Premium Channels:** Subject to credit qualification. After 3 mos., you will be billed \$60/mo. for HBO, Cinemax, Showtime, Starz and DISH Movie Pack unless you call to cancel. **Other:** All packages, programming, features, and functionality are subject to change without notice. After 6 mos., you will be billed \$8/mo. for Protection Plan unless you call to cancel. After 2 years, then-current everyday prices for all services apply. For business customers, additional monthly fees may apply. Free standard professional installation only. 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. 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 C.P.D. Reg. No. T.S. R1903.

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THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
After the Fire**

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



Management

Paul Thompson, Executive Vice President and General Manager
Jimmy Beecham, Director of Engineering
Russell Cherry, Manager of Purchasing
Tammy Dixon, Manager of Marketing
Annette Eaton, Consumer Accts. Supervisor
Glenn Hale, Dir. of Finance and Administration
Laura Kirby, Human Resource Coordinator
Ralph Law, Director of Operations
Steve Linville, Field Engineer Supervisor
Jason Short, Network and 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
 415 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
 Austin Peay Highway
 P.O. Box 178, Westmoreland, TN 37186
 615-644-2221

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AS I SEE IT

The value of electricity

As the new year begins, the tradition of making a resolution continues for many of us. It's a way of creating value for something in which we believe and to fulfill a promise.

Many times those resolutions quickly fall by the wayside. But at Tri-County Electric, there is a resolution we keep all year: providing safe, reliable electricity and keeping your electric bill affordable.

Did you know that an average day's worth of electricity costs less than \$5?

You can't find many items that cost less than \$5 in today's world — a gallon of gas, loaf of bread or fast-food sandwich, perhaps. Electricity still remains one of the best values around. In fact, electricity has the lowest cost per day of any of the items in the chart below.

The cost of powering your home rises at a slower pace than many of your typical expenses. Compare the average price increase of those expenses each year over the last five years, and the value of electricity shines.

Now, consider one dollar's worth of electricity. When you see what that can get you, the value is enormous:

- An air conditioner for 24 hours
- A refrigerator for one week
- A 40-inch LCD television for one month

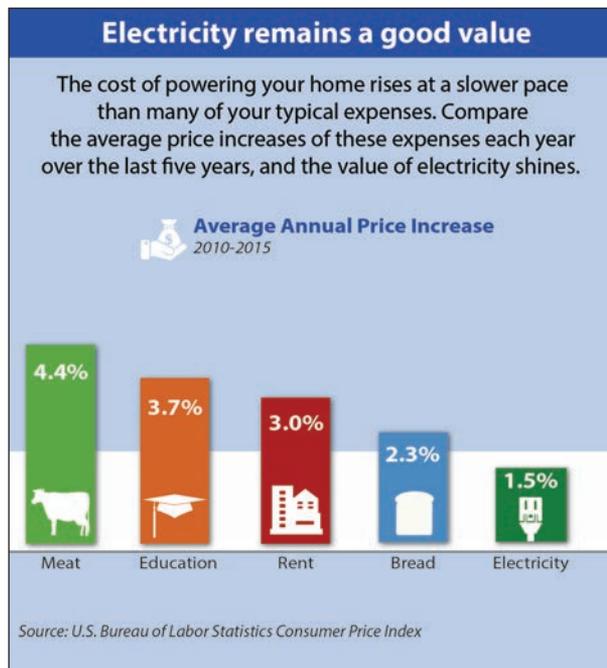
- A lamp for six months
- A mobile phone for 1.5 years

Along with that value comes reliability. Did you know that a typical household owns an average of 25 consumer electronic products, of which 99 percent have to be plugged in or recharged? Tri-County Electric knows that when you plug in or flip a switch, you expect to get the electricity you need.

To ensure your needs are met and the continued value of your electricity for the coming year, Tri-County Electric resolves to keep an eye on state and national regulatory issues that could impact the cost of providing electricity. We'll make sure we continue to research the latest state-of-the-art technology so we can most efficiently bring you the electricity you need.



Paul Thompson
 Executive Vice President and General Manager, Tri-County Electric



2016 Service Awards



Mike Davis and Ann McClure



Rachel Phelps. Not pictured is Billy Wilson



Annette Eaton



Jerry Driver and Tracy Roark. Not pictured are Brenda Teal and Steve Emmert.



Robert Birdwell and Jeff Asberry



From left, front row, Sammy Farlee, Tammy Dixon, April Hesson, Jeff Proffitt, Nathan Gregory and J.R. Thacker. Back: Greg Cline, Johnathan Marsh and Glenn Hale.



From left, Lindsay Wilkinson, Chad West, Shirl Perkins, Alan Carman, Kyle Hewett and Kyle Sircy.



From left, Brittany Page, Leigh Ann Meeks, Angie Deering, Tyler East, Nick Chapman and Holden Pitts. Not pictured are Dustin Cook and Holly Gammons.

New employees



From left are Alexia Hibdon, Ben Hall, Hope Green, Holden Davis, Kolby Sullivan, Daniel Cherry, Casey Cole and Jalyn Lankford.



Kesley Jenkins is a new employee who was mistakenly left out of the group photo.

Retiree recognized

Retiree Shirl Perkins was presented a silver tray and retirement album on Dec. 7 in recognition of 10 years of dedicated service to Tri-County Electric. Shirl retired from our Scottsville District Office on July 29.

At right, Shirl Perkins receives her silver tray from Tri-County Electric Executive Vice President and General Manager Paul Thompson.



Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. There are a number of factors that impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.energyright.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

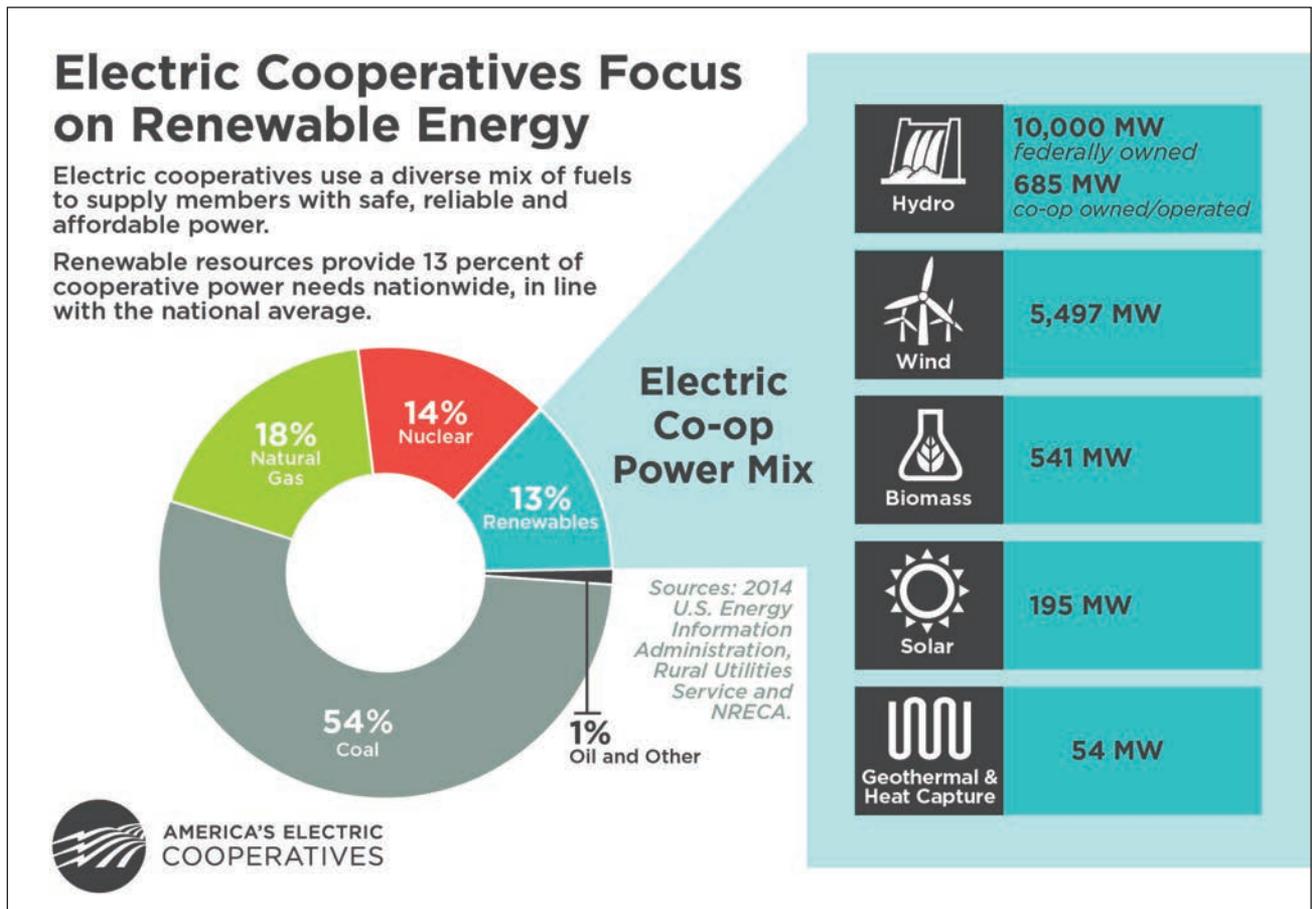
- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb. And you don't ever need to change the bulbs. In 50 years, when the fixture wears out, you'll replace the whole unit.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both the fan and a light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.





5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179

Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

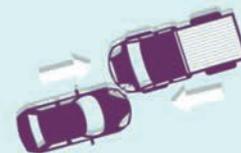
21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)



4X RISK



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)



2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!
 Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Turn off lights when you leave a room.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p>Turn off water while brushing your teeth.</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.</p>	
	<p>JULY</p> <p>Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Take short showers instead of baths.</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.</p>	

Tri-County Electric

"owned & operated by those we serve"

dish

\$39.99
Per Month

TV Price Guaranteed For 2 Years

All offers require credit qualification, 24-month commitment with early termination fee and eAutoPay.

SAVE A BUNDLE

DISH TV Service
+ High-Speed Internet

Prices starting at:

\$14.95

Restrictions apply. Subject to availability.

New Year's Resolution:
STOP paying for channels you don't watch!

Start with **DISH's** most popular channels...



◆ **First Channel Pack INCLUDED,**
additional Channel Packs start at only **\$6/mo.**

Action Channel Pack	Variety Channel Pack	Kids Channel Pack	Locals Channel Pack
<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>	<p>...and many more!</p>

FREE **HBO** **CINEMAX** **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 **SHOWTIME** **STARZ**

FREE **HD** for life

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January 2017 www.tnmagazine.org

THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE

**Gatlinburg
*After the Fire***

**History for Kids:
Finding Fort Blount**

**Shutterbug Contest:
Enter Your Pet's Pic**

TECA Celebrates 75

A Healthier New Year



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AS I SEE IT

Manager's Viewpoint

Electric cooperatives are ready to work with elected officials

As the nation prepares to welcome a new Congress and presidential administration, America's electric cooperatives are ready to welcome back old friends and introduce ourselves to newcomers.

The co-ops' message to elected officials — old and new, Republican and Democrat — will be the same: We all need to work together to protect consumer access to safe, reliable and affordable electric service.

We have reason to believe this message will be well-received. After all, co-ops speak for more than 42 million electric consumers nationwide, a sizeable constituency by any measure.

Moreover, whatever you thought of the 2016 campaign, one message came through loud and clear: Many, many people don't believe their concerns are being heard. For member-owned cooperatives, listening to people is at the heart of our business model. And we carry our members' concerns to public officials every day.

As Tennessee Valley Electric Cooperative reaches out to engage with elected officials, we will build on the strength of Co-ops Vote, the grassroots initiative to reverse declining voter turnout in rural areas.

Co-ops Vote did more than register voters. It sent a strong message to the country's elected officials that rural electric consumers matter.

And co-ops will be reinforcing this message with a request that policymakers keep the needs of consumers front and center — needs such as funding for infrastructure,

especially transmission lines and access to natural gas, increasing the efficiency of the electric system and determining the future of hydropower and nuclear energy. Elected officials will be making decisions affecting every aspect of the electric system.

Advocating for these issues is nothing new. In fact, we've been doing it for years. And we're ready to continue the fight on your behalf.

Now is the time to reach out to all elected officials, new and returning.

Here at TVEC, we will be reaching out to local, state and federal officials. In initial conversations, we will be explaining the unique member-owned, not-for-profit co-op business model. And we will be reminding longtime politicians of our co-op's commitment to its members.

In Washington, D.C., our national trade association, the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, will be conducting similar introductions, speaking with key agencies and departments within the new administration. It is likely that many of these new policymakers will know little or nothing of the co-op model.

Forging an energy future that serves rural consumers and protecting access to safe, reliable and affordable electric power will be a bipartisan effort. Electric co-ops are optimistic. As we work with our elected leaders, we hope to renew a spirit of cooperation in the nation's capital and in statehouses across the country.

After all, cooperation is what co-ops do best!



Gerald Taylor
General Manager,
Tennessee Valley
Electric Cooperative

Virtual home-energy audits

By Tom Tate

Is your home using energy efficiently? Unless it was built quite recently to stringent energy-efficiency standards, there are bound to be areas of your home where you can improve efficiency, save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

In a perfect world, your best option is to hire a trained professional to conduct a full-blown, in-home energy audit. This usually involves a detailed inspection of your home's insulation levels, HVAC system, lighting, appliances and exterior space. A professional energy auditor will typically conduct a blower door test to check pressurization and spot hard-to-find leaks in the exterior. In addition, a professional may use a duct blaster to identify leaks in your home's ductwork.

One drawback to the in-home energy audit is finding a time that works with your busy schedule. An energy audit can take several hours when done correctly, which means you might have to take time off from work, farm out the pets, get help with the kids and their after-school activities — and so forth.

Luckily, there is a viable alternative: the online or “virtual” home energy audit. These tools have come a long way over the last 10 years. Today's online energy audits are user-friendly and take only a few minutes to complete. An online energy audit can provide an assessment of your home's energy efficiency and typically provides helpful tips on how to reduce energy waste. The audits utilize sophisticated computer models that typically use local housing types — factoring in the age, size, flooring and construction materials of the home — and local weather data.

I have used several of these audits and found that they typically come within a dollar or two of my actual energy bills when fed the correct information. Amazing! True, the audit won't provide a pressurization test of your home and ductwork, but it is a convenient start.

Here's where to look for online audits:

- Nearby utilities: They will include comparable weather and housing data, so the audit will be more precise.
- The Department of Energy: hes.lbl.gov/consumer

A word of caution: Be careful when using online energy audit software provided by organizations other



If you want to know how energy-efficient your home really is, an “in-person” home energy audit conducted by a certified professional is ideal. But if you can't find the time to hire a professional and schedule the appointment, consider a convenient online energy audit. Source: StockSnap

than utilities, government agencies or universities. Unfortunately, some companies may try to obtain information to sell their own products and services. If you see phrases like, “Learn what your power company does not want you to know,” or the site looks like a marketing page, I'd suggest moving on. Unless you are dealing with a local electric co-op or your trusted utility provider, do not give any personal information outside of your physical address (for data accuracy) or an email address for receiving a full report.

If an online energy audit doesn't interest you, fear not. The Department of Energy offers a do-it-yourself energy audit section on its website: energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-home-energy-audits.

The bottom line? Choose the energy audit that works for you, then implement as many of the recommendations as you can. Even taking small steps can add up to significant results, and you'll see the benefits in your utility bills for years to come.

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.

Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.energyright.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

Does Rover really need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.

A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.
- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire.

Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.

- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older.

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where

we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

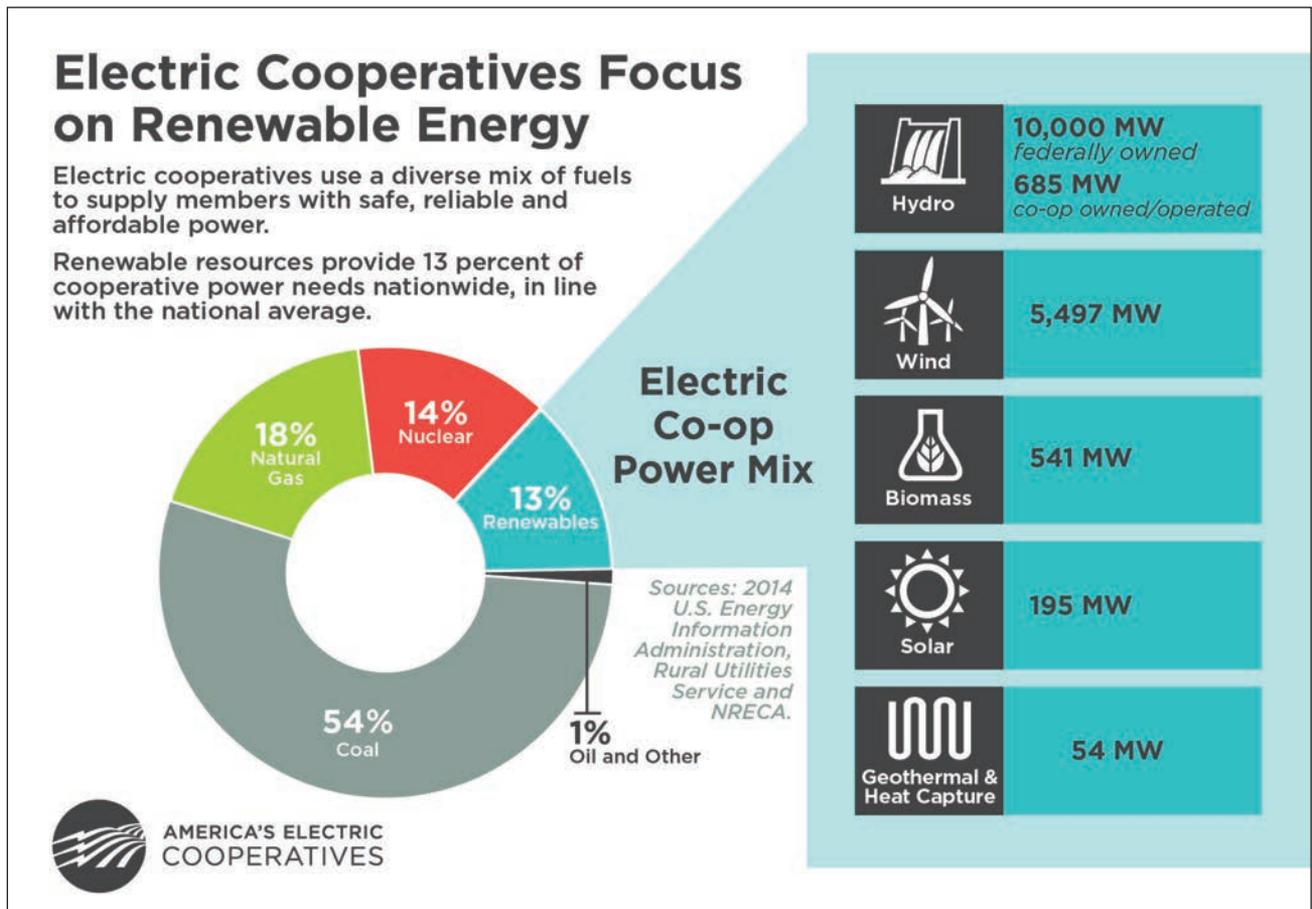
Source: EnergyStar.gov

Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb. And you don't ever need to change the bulbs. In 50 years, when the fixture wears out, you'll replace the whole unit.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both the fan and a light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.





5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179

Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

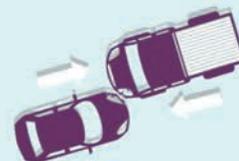
21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)



4X RISK



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)

January 2017 www.tnsmagazine.org

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See how easy it can be to **live comfortably.**

Whatever the weather brings, you'll be ready. Make your home the best it can be. Visit 2eScore.com to find out how energy efficient your home is and what you can do to improve it. With a high eScore you can afford to live comfortably.

CONTENTS

DEPARTMENTS

10 Tennessee History for Kids

Fort Blount in present-day Jackson County was an important crossroads in frontier Tennessee. *by Bill Carey*

20 Co-op News

News and information from your electric cooperative or electric membership corporation.

27 Home Energy Q&A

Remodeling your kitchen, the heart of your home, is an opportunity to improve efficiency. *by Patrick Keegan*

28 Tennessee Almanac

This event listing tells what's happening across the state.

31 50 Years Ago ...

Look inside *The Tennessee Magazine* from January 1967.

32 A Taste of Tennessee

Start the new year off *eating* right with lighter takes on traditional fare.

36 Community Corner

Check out Artist's Palette, see our Find the Flag winners and learn about our monthly poetry contest.

38 Poet's Playground

Tennessee's poets share their voices.

40 Your Antiques and Treasures

Readers' antiques and flea-market finds are appraised. *by Connie Sue Davenport*

ABOUT THE COVER

Andrea Ludden surveys what little is left of her Gatlinburg home. See page 12 for more about what's being called a "perfect firestorm." Photograph by Robin Conover

THIS PAGE

In preparing for its 75th anniversary, the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association found this vintage photograph from Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation. See page 8 for more about the association's legacy in assisting the state's electric co-ops.

FEATURES

8 History with a Purpose

The Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, continues to provide leadership and advocacy support to help co-ops serve their members.

12 After the Fire

Wildfires devastated areas of Sevier County and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in late November. Downtown Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge opened for business just 11 days after the fires, but the recovery will be painstakingly slow for residents and business owners who lost everything.

by Robin Conover

18 Shutterbug Contest

Send us your best, most creative photographs that reveal your pets' personalities.

PERSPECTIVES

4 Tennessee Today

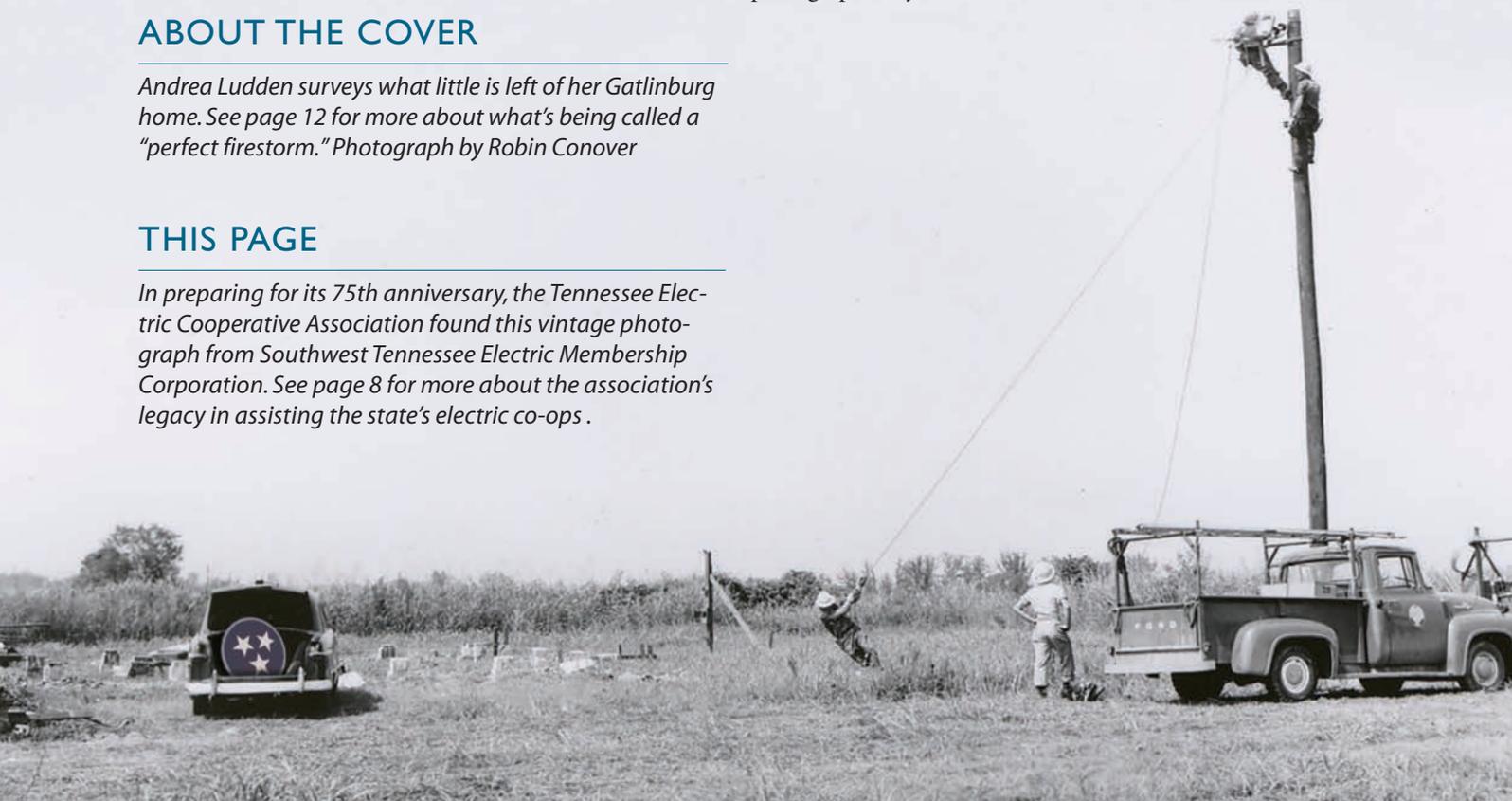
Electric co-op leaders meet in Nashville, solidifying a unified voice with which to help their communities. *by David Callis*

6 Co-op Concerns

Take action to help Tennessee's rural areas gain vital access to broadband internet service. *by Mike Knotts*

42 Point of View

Peer through the viewfinder with an award-winning photographer. *by Robin Conover*



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TENNESSEE TODAY *Manager's Viewpoint*

Unified

The theme for Tennessee's electric cooperatives in 2017 is "Unified." We've just completed one of the most contentious elections in our nation's history, and this country is as divided politically as ever.

With that backdrop, leaders gathered in Nashville in late November for the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting. There, they focused on the things that bring us together rather than those that push us apart.

Your co-op exists today because small groups of men and women across the state were dedicated to bringing electricity to rural areas. Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Such was the case with those co-op trailblazers. They were unified.

Serving on a co-op board is not a fulltime job — it is a volunteer position that requires sacrifices of time to share talents. Serving as a board member can be time-consuming and challenging, but the co-op members who serve are driven by a desire to improve the communities in which they live. Our role at the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association (TECA) is to provide leadership, advocacy and support to the co-ops, their employees and these board members.



David Callis
General Manager,
Tennessee Electric
Cooperative
Association

The annual meeting marks our preparation for the coming year. TECA provides leadership through our educational programs, advocacy through our communications and legislative efforts and support through our mutual aid programs. Our efforts are designed to empower your cooperative's leaders as they perform their mission of improving everyday life for you, the co-op's member-owners.

During the course of the meeting, attendees were given updates on the political climate and what to expect in the coming months and years. A large part of what we do involves political issues. We actively engage legislators and policymakers at local, state and federal levels to ensure that legislation and regulations don't interfere with a co-op's ability to provide safe, reliable and affordable energy. What happens in Nashville and Washington, D.C., can have a dramatic effect on the cost of your electric bill.

A major issue this year is our relentless effort to bring broadband to rural Tennessee. Rural residents deserve the same access to essential services as their urban and suburban counterparts. Without the access that broadband internet provides, our communities are left behind in education, economic development and healthcare. This is our century's great effort — like rural electrification was for the 1900s.

We also took time to honor legislators who have gone above and beyond

in their commitment to our cooperatives. State Sen. Ken Yager received the first K.T. Hutchinson Award. Read more about Dr. Hutchinson, Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's first manager, on page 8.

We are dedicated to the future of our communities by supporting our youth. Each year, nearly 200 high school students participate in a week-long educational trip to Washington, D.C. During TECA's annual meeting, Megan Lewis, a delegate from Tri-State Electric Membership Corporation on the 2015 Youth Tour, was recognized for winning a \$10,000 scholarship provided by Tennessee's electric cooperatives.

Though the annual meeting lasted only a few days, communications, government relations, education and training are activities that go on year-round. TECA's role is to train our cooperative employees and directors to be leaders. Our education and training programs elevate the effectiveness and professionalism of co-op directors and employees, increase workplace safety and prepare co-ops for the rapid changes impacting our industry. These are critical roles that TECA fulfills for our member cooperatives.

Working together and speaking with one voice that carries a unified message amplifies the impact we have. It is critical to our cooperatives and the communities we serve. ■

Top, TECA Board President Jim Coode welcomes attendees to the annual meeting. Center, CNN contributor Alex Castellanos shares thoughts on the future of politics following the 2016 election. Bottom, \$10,000 scholarship winner Megan Lewis addresses co-op leaders. Joining her on stage are Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest scholarship winners Kaitlyn Springer, left, and Hope Kelley.





Forgotten Fort

Page 10

Fort Blount, an important site in the late 1700s, is today a little-known Tennessee history footnote.

Almanac of Events

Page 28 and tnmagazine.org

Fun events and other special happenings abound across Tennessee this month.



50 Years Ago ...

Page 31 and tnmagazine.org

Take a quick peek inside the January 1967 installment of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

Our e-Newsletter

tnmagazine.org/enewsletter

Visit us online and subscribe to our monthly e-newsletter to receive the latest stories, contests, recipes and more.

CO-OP CONCERNS

Manager's Viewpoint

If not you, then who?

Only every so often does a person have an opportunity to be a part of something really special, to do something that will help change the lives of countless others. For a few of us, that action might become something of great notoriety. For example, Nashville's Becca Stevens of Thistle Farms was recently named a CNN Hero for 20 years of dedication to helping women escape prostitution, addiction and abuse. It was a worthy honor. But for most of us, our moment takes place when no one else is watching. Perhaps you make a habitual donation to the Salvation Army bell-ringer. Maybe you volunteer as a Tennessee Promise mentor or have invested countless hours into the lives of youth at your church (as my mother did).

Whether your involvement takes place in the public eye or is seen by no one but yourself, the common ingredient for success is the singular action of an individual. You — not someone else or another group of people — took action for something you believe in. **You** did it.

Today, you have an opportunity to make a difference in the future of your children, your neighbors, your community and all of rural Tennessee. And I'm asking for your help.

Broadband is one of the most important topics the Tennessee Legislature will tackle in 2017. As many of you are painfully aware, broadband service outside the most densely populated areas is lacking in our state. Many places lack internet access at all. And while we watch multiple providers compete fiercely to provide Gigabit connectivity to growing Nashville, our small-town and rural residents see little or no new investment in technology to serve their needs.

I've been to countless community gatherings and co-op annual meetings where lack of access to broadband is the No. 1 topic. Stories about parents driving their kids to fast-food restaurants just so they can complete their online assignments are painfully com-

mon. Businesses and industrial parks need robust connectivity to turn on the engine of job creation but all too often find themselves stuck in a "chicken-or-egg" dilemma.

The state of Tennessee recognizes this a problem. Citing broadband's role in attracting new companies and fostering job growth, the Department of Economic and Community Development conducted a study to recommend changes. The legislature's own "think tank," the Tennessee Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations, also took an in-depth look at how broadband impacts our state. Both came to similar conclusions: State law needs to be changed to solve

this problem. Governor Bill Haslam has spoken publicly about his commitment to seeing meaningful broadband legislation pass this year.

I believe it can happen. But this is not a problem that government can solve with a simple stroke of a pen. It requires a long-term commitment to the people, places and things that make Tennessee's rural and suburban communities great. Ask yourself this: While the bounty of rural America is brought to our great cities, why shouldn't the opportunities of cities be brought to rural America?

Your electric co-op is committed to this task — not because it's good for business but because it's good for all of us. So where do we begin? Start by making your voice heard by our leaders in Nashville. You need to take action, not someone else or another group of people. **You**. Because when you speak, the politicians know they have the support of the voters. And when your elected officials have your support, the laws will change.

Thankfully, it is easier than ever to join this movement. Simply go to takeaction.tnelectric.org and click "get involved." From there, you can easily learn more, stay informed and contact your elected officials. I hope you'll do it today. ■



Mike Knotts
Vice President of
Government Affairs

Eye Doctor Helps Tennessee Legally Blind To See

High Technology For Low Vision Patients Allows Many To Drive Again



For 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:

www.lowvisiontn.com

For more information and a FREE telephone consultation, call us today:
1-855-405-8800

Offices located in Lebanon,
Knoxville and Columbia.

John M. Pino, O.D., Ph.D.



History WITH Purpose

The Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association celebrates its 75th year of service to co-ops and rural Tennessee

Electric cooperatives are based on a fairly simple concept: We can accomplish more working together than we can separately.

In the 1930s, rural communities worked together to form electric cooperatives. These co-ops provided power and light to rural and suburban Tennessee, services otherwise unavailable outside of the state's larger cities.

Ultimately, 23 rural electric cooperatives were formed across the state in the 1930s and '40s.

As rural Tennessee grew, so did its co-ops.

Quickly, these co-ops grew from small operations with one or two employees into large businesses with thousands of consumers. With size came complexity, regulations and legislative hurdles.

The electric cooperatives faced their first such challenge in 1940 when the state's Public Service Commission attempted to tax the new co-ops the same as for-profit institutions, a move that would have had

serious impacts on rural electric consumers. Co-op leaders challenged this position by organizing a united effort to educate the commission on the unique structure of cooperatives.

In 1942, co-ops found themselves working together again as the effects of World War II made it difficult for them to acquire materials, personnel and even power.

When the decision was made in December of 1942 to create a permanent organization to coordinate efforts on a statewide level, it should be no surprise that establishing a cooperative would be the logical solution.

Floyd Jones, an early co-op leader, wrote, "The Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association was formed for the express purpose of taking unified action on various problems affecting rural electric cooperatives."

The association's early work focused on legislative and regulatory issues and on training co-op employees to do their jobs safely.



The work of the association expanded to include member education and communications in 1958 when John Stanford was hired as the first editor of *The Tennessee Magazine*. The first issue was mailed in September of that year.

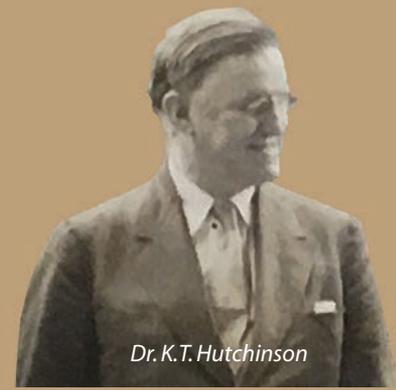
Today, the mission of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association is to provide leadership, advocacy and support to unify and empower the state's consumer-owned electric co-ops. While government affairs, job training and safety and communications remain its primary duties, the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's work also includes coordinating disaster response and preparing the next generation of rural leaders through our youth programs.

Currently, the association is leading a determined fight to expand another critical service — broadband — past city limits into the state's unserved areas.

"The leaders who formed our co-ops and this association were visionaries," says David Callis, executive vice president and general manager of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association. "We stand on the shoulders of giants, and their accomplishments merit our gratitude and celebration. We must also use this time of commemoration as an opportunity to refine our focus and prepare the association and our co-ops to meet the challenges we face today and those we will face tomorrow."

Many things have changed in the last 75 years. Enhancements in healthcare, communications, technology and transportation would make the world we live in almost unrecognizable to even the most progressive leaders of the 1940s.

Despite these changes, some things still ring true: There is value in working together for a common purpose, and we best serve our co-ops, communities and member-owners when we're unified.



Dr. K.T. Hutchinson

Dr. K.T. Hutchinson taught agriculture at a state college that later became Middle Tennessee State University. In the 1930s, he began helping local farmers organize an electric cooperative. At that time, the Tennessee Electric Power Company, a for-profit utility, had tremendous influence over the appointment of teachers at the college.

Dr. Hutchinson received a letter from the power company instructing him to cease his efforts to form an electric cooperative or the utility would "build a fire under him." Hutchinson told them to go ahead when their "wood got dry," and he was dismissed from the college a short time later.

Hutchinson was instrumental in the formation of Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation and the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, serving as the statewide association's first manager. He went on to serve in the state legislature and as assistant secretary of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.



The history of co-ops tells the stories of individuals who were willing to take risks to improve their communities. In honor of Dr. Hutchinson's legacy, the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association awarded the first Dr. K.T. Hutchinson Award in November to State Sen. Ken Yager of Kingston for his work on behalf of co-ops and rural Tennessee. Above, he accepts the award from Mike Knotts, Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association vice president of government affairs.



Crossroads of Tennessee history

Fort Blount found after more than 200 years

The first week of May 1797 was an interesting time to be at Fort Blount. On the fourth of that month, John Sevier passed through. Sevier — hero of Kings Mountain and veteran of more than 30 armed encounters with Indians — was in his first year as governor of Tennessee.

Four days later, a Frenchman of apparent aristocratic birth, along with his retinue, arrived on horseback. Ridiculously out of place, the man identified himself as Prince Louis Phillipe of France. He said he and his companions had left Kingston three days earlier and were on their way to Nashville. In broken English, he said they were hungry and were willing to pay for any food.

The visitors from far away were disappointed by the accommodations. According to Louis Phillipe's journal,

Fort Blount was a military outpost on the western edge of the Cumberland Plateau in present-day Jackson County. It was active in the 1790s when settlers claimed much of what is now Middle Tennessee, but the Cherokee nation was still recognized as the owner of the Cumberland Plateau.

"They gave us cornbread, a little milk and fatback of bear, salted and smoked, which we found impossible to swallow, hungry or no."

One wonders whether it was the worst meal of his life. Years later, Louis Phillipe returned to his home-



The Cumberland River as viewed from the former site of Fort Blount in Jackson County. This is where the so-called "Crossing of the Cumberland" was located. Photo by Brian Stansberry

land and reigned as king of France from 1830 until 1848.

Fort Blount was a military outpost on the western edge of the Cumberland Plateau in present-day Jackson County. It was active in the 1790s when settlers claimed much of what is now Middle Tennessee, but the Cherokee nation was still recognized as the owner of the Cumberland Plateau. At a time when Indian attacks were still frequent, families migrating west would stop at Fort Southwest Point (in present-day Kingston). They would then ride or walk across the mountains with armed guards as far as Fort Blount, where they would cross the Cumberland River by ferry. From there they took a route (now referred to as Avery's Trace) through present-day Trousdale and Sumner counties and into Nashville.

Originally known as the "Crossing of the Cumberland," we think a blockhouse was built there in 1792. By 1794, it was known as Fort Blount and included a palisade wall.

The list of people who passed through the area doesn't just include the king of France and the first governor of Tennessee. In 1788, when the road was first opened but the fort was not yet built, at least 60 families crossed the Cumberland River there on their way to Nashville. Andrew Jackson passed through on his way west that same year.

A few months ago, I wrote a column that mentioned the Nickajack Expedition, the decisive attack on the Chickamaugans west of present-day Chattanooga in 1794. The chief scout for the Nickajack Expedition was Joseph Brown, a young man whose family had been attacked by the Chickamaugans and who had spent a year living with them before he and his sisters were released. No sooner had Brown made his way back to Nashville than he volunteered for duty at Fort Blount. He was there for about a year, starting in April 1795.

In March 1796, French botanist Andre Michaux spent the night at Fort

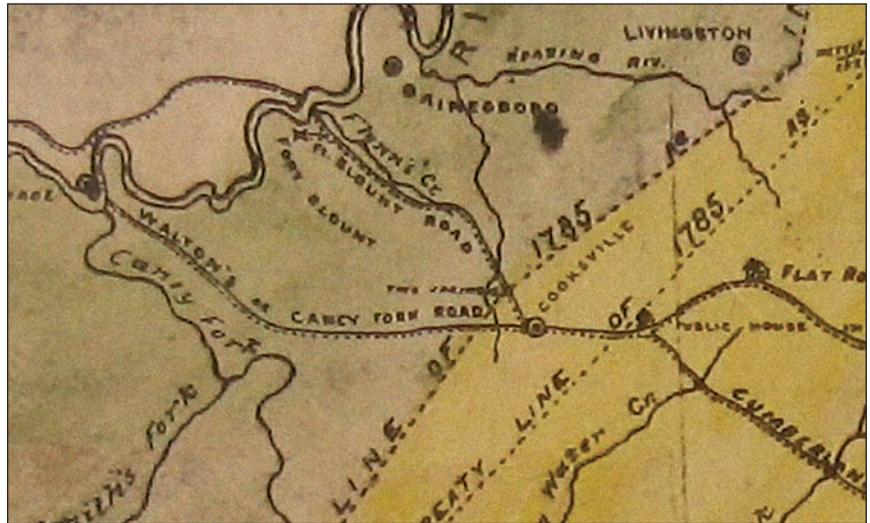
Blount and discovered in the woods near the fort a species of tree previously unknown to Europeans. Today we know this tree as the yellowwood, and in 1991, it was designated as Tennessee's Bicentennial Tree.

Like many frontier installations, Fort Blount was not active for long. Indian attacks died down by 1796. The state of Tennessee and the federal government withdrew troops from the area about two years later. Not long after that, William Walton started a new ferry service about 20 miles southwest in a community later known as Carthage. People stopped passing through the Fort Blount area as they crossed Tennessee.

There remained a small community near the site of Fort Blount called Williamsburg, named for Sampson Williams, owner of the land on which the fort sat. For a time, Williamsburg was the seat of Jackson County. Eventually, however, the community died away, and the fort was torn down — or fell down.

As the decades passed, people forgot where the fort had been. They knew the fort was close to Sampson Williams' gravesite, but some early accounts said it was one side of the river; some said it was on the other.

In the 1980s, state of Tennessee archaeologist Sam Smith became fascinated with Fort Blount because of extensive research he conducted at Fort Southwest Point. The Division of



This map, originally sketched around 1810 and published by the Baltimore firm of A. Hoen & Company, shows the location of Fort Blount just west of the Cumberland Plateau. The map below shows where the fort was in relation to modern city names and points of interest. Fort Blount is found between Hartsville and Carthage.

Archaeology secured grants to learn what it could about Jackson County's forgotten frontier garrison.

Using old maps, journals and a lawsuit involving Sampson Williams, archaeologists were able to come up with a pretty good guess as to where to start digging. "The general area had been long suspected," says Benjamin Nance, who took part in the project and still works for the Division of Archaeology. "But it took extensive research to narrow down enough of an area to test archaeologically."

Archaeologists quickly discovered that Fort Blount was on the west side of the river. They found evidence of

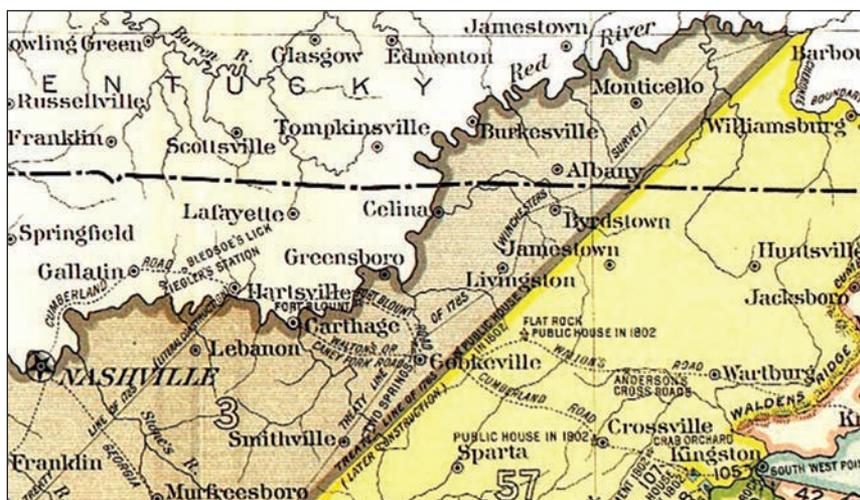
several structures, including an arrangement of post holes that appear to have been dug to build a palisade wall. They also found thousands of pieces of kitchen artifacts, hundreds of pieces of kitchenware, 38 musket balls and 181 buttons. They found a stock clasp, a military button with an eagle on it and a button that indicated the owner had been a member of the Fourth Infantry Regiment — which had been stationed at Fort Blount.

They even found nine coins — eight of which were made in Spain and one that was marked with the year 1781.

"It was a pretty cool project," Nance says.

The dig put to rest the long debate about exactly where Fort Blount was. However, 20 years later, the former site of the fort remains a combination of private and Army Corps of Engineers property. There are no plans for the state to acquire the land or for anyone to build a historic park or replica of the fort.

So Fort Blount, the place through which a famous botanist, governor, president and king all passed, is and will remain a little-known chapter of Tennessee history.



After the Fire

Tennesseans struggle to find any silver lining of hope among the ashes

Story and Photographs by Robin Conover



The Chimney Tops II wildfire made time stand still as only a disastrous event can. The wind-swept fires stopped daily life in the hardscrabble region in its tracks on the evening of Nov. 28. A season of record drought left thick ground cover of the forest floor bone-dry and set the stage for the worst Tennessee wildfire in memory. Officials believe the senseless act of two teenagers throwing lighted matches onto the Chimney Tops trailside may have led to the remote fire that began Nov 23. Still burning five days later, hurricane-force winds fanned the flames into an inferno, red-hot embers carrying considerable distances and igniting numerous fires across the southern region of Sevier County.



Samaritan's Purse team leader Paul Brock, second from left, hugs homeowners Sandra, to his left, and Christy Cover during a prayer circle with volunteers who dug through the ashes, trying to find anything salvageable. Sandra's husband, Jim, passed away just three weeks before the fire, making this even more painful. Volunteers did find one of his favorite World War II model airplanes, top left, in the debris.



The wildfires engulfed structures, including residences, businesses and vacation homes, seemingly at random, burning some to the ground while missing others that appear to be virtually unscathed.



Andrea Ludden has been receiving many calls from friends and fellow artists as they learn she lost the home she shared with her brother, Alex, and their father, Rolph. Only the home's walls were left standing. The garage and an outbuilding were also lost while the houses on either side were left nearly untouched.

“I remember I went out in the morning at about 10, and it looked so eerie, very orange,” says Gatlinburg resident Andrea Ludden, recalling the events of Nov. 28. “It had been smoky for two weeks, but on Monday it was very heavy.”

“I had some errands to do, and Alex, my brother, mentioned maybe we should get some things together just in case,” Andrea says, standing in front of the burned-out ruins of their home. “I’m like, ‘Ohh — come on. They are saying the fire is in the park, and we’re far from the park. We’ll be fine.’”

She had no way of knowing that in a few hours, she, Alex and their father, Rolph, would be fleeing their home.

“We just had a regular day and tried not to go outside because of the smoke,” she says. “By sunset, the wind really started to pick up. That’s when smoke started coming really hard. I remember getting some trash bags and stuffing them around the





fireplace to keep the smoke from coming down the chimney.”

Like many, Andrea explained that they hadn’t heard much on the local news because the fire was still in the mountains and not in Gatlinburg.

“I remember earlier in the afternoon hearing news reports saying, ‘Don’t panic; it’s just a lot of smoke.’ So that was our mentality.”

As the winds increased, embers began to fall — as did fire-damaged trees and power lines. More fires ignited, making roads increasingly difficult to navigate as flames engulfed the surrounding hillsides.

“We heard the sirens on our street about 8:30 p.m. I went out, and they were at my neighbors’ house, yelling, ‘Get out, get out,’” Adrea says, recounting the frantic moments that allowed them only enough time to grab their dog and the keys to their vans. “I ran back to my house, trying to get the dog and tell my brother and my dad that we have to evacuate.”

“You just hear about disasters somewhere else, and you think, ‘I can’t believe how dumb people are,’” she says. “I tell ya, I think I’m a smart person, but we were so dumb that day.”



Top, a view from above shows the total destruction of the Luddens’ home. Also lost were their much-loved antiques and artwork. The Luddens were faced with a labor of love and despair as they sifted through the debris, which compacted down to a layer only two to three feet deep, in hopes of finding anything that had survived. Above, fire damage can be seen in the charred earth and rocks on a ridge below the Chimney Tops. While many trees are still standing, it’s not yet known how much damage they sustained.



Above, Nancy Holt of Kodak, center, helps Ohioans Tom Cason, left, and his wife, Donna, screen rubble in hopes of finding small objects that can be saved. Below, Samaritan's Purse volunteers work at the Covers' homesite.



The Luddens' home was destroyed. However, their beloved Salt and Pepper Shaker Museum in downtown Gatlinburg, begun by her late mom, also named Andrea, survived.

"Now, in hindsight — and, of course, hindsight is always wonderful — you look back and just wonder 'if only,'" Andrea explains. "It was so smoky; that should have been our first warning.

"It's not the feeling of the rug being pulled from under your feet. I had that feeling last year with my mom's passing. This feels like the ground is gone. I've never been in this situation before."

Like the Luddens, Christy Cover was at home that Monday night on Beanstalk Road where she lived with her stepmother, Sandra. "Sandy had gone to take care of her mother that day, and she called me about 7 that night and advised me to pack a bag because I might have to leave," says

Cindy. "In the back of my mind, I thought, 'Nah, it's not going to happen.' But the longer I stayed, the smokier it got, and I got worried about my neighbor. She's elderly and doesn't get around too well, so I told her to pack a bag and went and picked her up."

Cindy thought they would weather the storm at her house, but as smoke began to pour inside, she realized they needed to leave — a decision that likely saved their lives.

"When we left, I thought we'd come back and the house would be fine," says Christy. But they returned to realize they lost everything: "There's nothing left to remember my father by, no pictures, not anything."

To make it even more tragic for the Covers, Jim, the family patriarch, died just two weeks earlier.

The Luddens and Covers represent just two stories of escape and loss to the wildfire. Tragically, 14 lives were



taken that night, leaving more families with unbearable grief.

More would have certainly been lost if not for the heroic efforts of first responders and law enforcement during the tragedy.

In just a few painful hours, more than 2,700 businesses and homes were damaged or destroyed, and the lives of the 14,000 who evacuated were changed forever.

As flames raced up hillsides, devouring everything in their path, thousands fled down winding mountain roads lined with fire. Vacationers and residents alike made harrowing escapes through walls of flames. In their escapes, neighbors helped neighbors, strangers helped strangers.

The city of Pigeon Forge was relatively undamaged as was the strip in downtown Gatlinburg. Both were open for business just 11 days after the wildfire threatened to destroy them.

Residents, local officials, business owners and Rotary Club and church members have pulled together to help each other. With the help of the National Guard, Red Cross and an army of volunteers, a massive recovery effort was launched. Truckloads of donations have been received and sorted for distribution. A center was opened at the Boyd's Bears facility in Pigeon Forge for residents to receive nonperishable food, clothes and supplies.

The people of this region are resilient, hardworking and determined — "mountain tough." They will rebuild, and they will heal — especially with the outpouring of help and love they have seen so far from countless volunteers, strangers and friends. ■



Top left, Tommy Smith of Bedford, Virginia, adds items to the assortment of coffee mugs and other collectables Samaritan's Purse volunteers recovered for Christy and Sandra Cover. Above, the Covers lost one car in the fire and nearly all of the contents of their home. Below, Sandra holds pieces of a necklace recovered from the ashes.



Finding Help, Giving Help

Mountaintough.org

The official website set up for the recovery efforts, mountaintough.org was built with the cooperation of Sevier County and the cities of Gatlinburg, Pigeon Forge and Sevierville to be a clearing house of information connecting people who need help or who want to give with the organizations they need to find. Donations of money, time and items are accepted. For more information, visit mountaintough.org or call 865-430-7384.

My People Fund

Dolly Parton created the fund through her Dollywood Foundation to give grants to families who lost everything. For more information or to donate, visit dollywoodfoundation.org or call 865-428-9488.

Great Smoky Mountains

The national park will offer updates at nps.gov/grsm and on its Facebook page — where you'll also find videos explaining the scope of damage.

Shutterbug

Photography Contest

Pets certainly have a way of working themselves into our hearts. Large or small, inside or outside, they make life better. For this Shutterbug contest, try to capture your pet's personality in some doggone good photographs.

Dogs dressed as cats, cats dressed as dogs, pigs dressed as people; in fact, animals in any costume are not what we are looking for. Your photographs can — but do not have to — include people with your pet. They can be selfies or just photographs of your pet by itself.

Just keep in mind a few basics: Use natural light, make strong compositions and focus on interesting subject matter. Simple, straightforward images with defined subjects and strong lighting usually work well.

As you accept this challenge, please stay safe. We don't want any pets harmed or "embarrassed" in the name of the Shutterbug contest.

Contest rules

1. The contest is open to amateur and professional photographers. For the purposes of this competition, you are considered a professional if you regularly sell your images or garner more than 50 percent of your income from photography.
2. Photographs must have been taken by you.
3. A photographer can enter no more than three photographs. There is no cost to enter.
4. A completed entry form (at right) must be attached to the back of **every** photograph entered. You can photocopy the form. Omitting any of this information can result in disqualification.
5. Extensive digital manipulation of photographs is prohibited. Limit the use of photo-editing software. Adjusting exposure, color balance, contrast and sharpness is allowed, but highly manipulating colors and content of images is not.
6. Employees of Tennessee's electric cooperatives and their immediate families are not eligible to win.
7. Please include the name of each recognizable person, if any other than yourself, in your photograph. It is the photographer's responsibility to have the subject's permission to enter his or her image in the contest. You must include the subject's name and contact information with your submission. Omitting any of this information can result in disqualification.



Shutterbug Entry Form

Clip this form and tape it to the back of each "Pets" entry.

(Please check one)

Amateur _____ Professional _____

(Please check one)

Junior Shutterbug _____ Shutterbug _____
(17 and younger) (18 and older)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Electric cooperative: _____

Email: _____

Entry title: _____

Location where the photograph was taken:

Any additional information: _____

PRINTS WILL NOT BE RETURNED.

This entry form is also available on our website.
Go to www.tnmagazine.org for more information.

8. By entering the contest, photographers automatically give *The Tennessee Magazine* permission to publish the winning images in print and digital publications, social media and on websites.

Shutterbug assignment "Pets"

Submissions — mail prints or enter online

1. Photographs must be entered as unmounted, 5-by-7-inch or larger prints or submitted online at www.tnmagazine.org. Please don't mail your only print of a photo. Because of large numbers of entries, **prints will not be returned.**
2. Enter online or send entries to *The Tennessee Magazine*, Tennessee Pets Photo Contest, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224.

Deadline

Entries must be entered online by midnight or postmarked by Tuesday, Jan. 31. Winners will be published in the March issue.

Prize packages:

Judges will select a first-, second- and third-place winner in each division and age group. These prizes will be awarded: First place wins \$150, second place \$100 and third place \$50.

My People Fund

**"Thank you for helping my people.
Your generosity means the world to me!"**



On the night of Nov. 28, 2016, terrible wildfires affected the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and surrounding area, including Gatlinburg and Pigeon Forge.

Dolly Parton and the Dollywood Foundation have established the My People Fund to help families rebuild and restore their lives. The fund provides \$1,000 each month for up to six months to Sevier County families who lost their homes in the wildfires.

Anyone can make a tax deductible donation to the My People Fund online at dollywoodfoundation.org or by mail at

The Dollywood Foundation
My People Fund
111 Dollywood Lane
Pigeon Forge, TN 37863

Please include "My People Fund" on the memo line and include a return address for a tax receipt.

100% of your donation will go directly to the families affected by the wildfires.



dollywoodfoundation.org

865-428-9488

The Dollywood Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit

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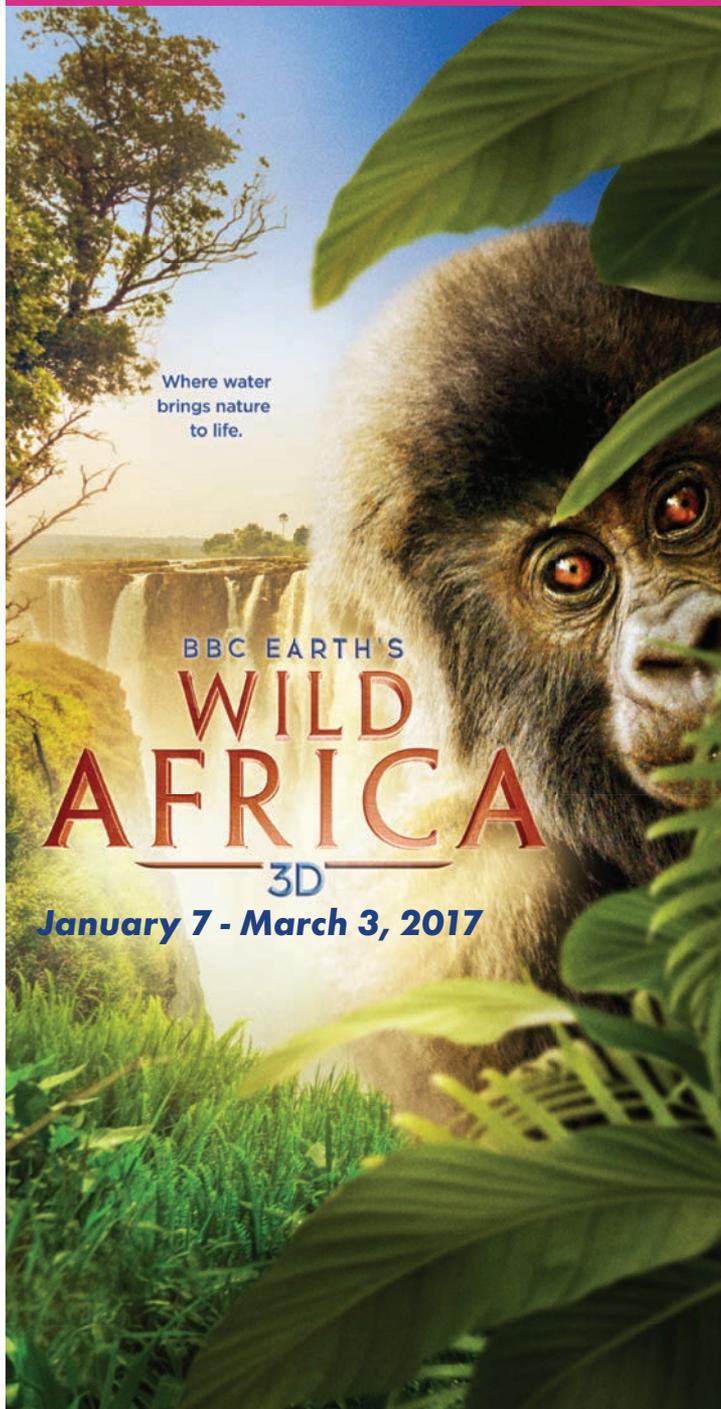


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Energy savings for every season

By Anne Prince

While saving money through greater energy efficiency may be a year-round objective for many consumers, the way to achieve this goal will vary by season. A number of factors impact energy efficiency, including weather, the age and condition of the home and desired comfort levels. During fall and winter months, when the outdoor temperature is chilly, consumers desire a warm home and seek to keep the cold air out. Conversely, in the spring and summer, the focus is on keeping the hot air from infiltrating cool abodes.

Fall and winter: keeping heat in

To maintain a warm indoor environment in chillier weather, there are simple steps you can take to increase energy efficiency. Fall is a great time to examine seals on doors and windows to check for air leaks. Caulk and weather strip as needed to seal in warm air and energy savings. Similarly, examine outlets for air leaks, and, where necessary, install gaskets around outlets to prevent drafts. During the day, open curtains or drapes on south-facing windows to enable sunlight to heat your home naturally. Close curtains or drapes at night for an added layer of window insulation.

As the temperature drops lower with the onset of winter, schedule a service appointment for your heating system to ensure it is operating at an optimal level. Low-cost or no-cost steps for energy savings include taping or affixing heavy, clear plastic to the inside of your window frames to create an additional barrier against cold air. Ensure that the plastic is tightly sealed to the frame to help reduce infiltration. Use a programmable thermostat to set the temperature as low as is comfortable when you are home (ideally around 68 degrees). When you are asleep or away, turn the temperature down 10-15 degrees for eight hours. According to the Department of Energy,

this small adjustment can help you save approximately 10 percent a year on heating and cooling costs.

Spring and summer: keeping your cool

During warmer months, energy savings and efficiency will require different measures, many of which are inexpensive. If you live in a climate that is cool, open your windows in the evening and turn off your cooling system while sleeping. In the morning, shut the windows and blinds to hold in the cool air. Where practical, plant trees and shrubs that provide shade in warm months and sunlight in winter. In addition to the aesthetic value, well-placed trees can take heat gain from the sun and provide needed shade by creating a canopy for the house.

In extremely hot weather, your cooling system works harder to close the gap between the high outdoor temperature and the cool indoor thermostat setting. To lessen the difference in temperature between the two and to lower cooling costs, set the thermostat as high as you can while maintaining your comfort level. Moreover, using a ceiling fan in conjunction with your air conditioning can allow you to increase the thermostat setting to approximately 4 degrees with no reduction in comfort levels.

During the hottest months, it's all the more critical to replace any remaining incandescent bulbs with LEDs. The waste heat from the old bulbs impacts energy use and creates wasteful and unwanted heat. Employ a programmable thermostat to adjust the settings a few degrees higher when no one is home or your family is sleeping.

To learn more about additional energy-saving tips and programs, visit www.energyright.com.

Anne Prince 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.

FIVE TIPS FOR SAVING ENERGY AT HOME

- 1 Set a programmable thermostat to turn down the heat when the house is empty or everyone is asleep.
- 2 Insulate your electric water heater.
- 3 Plug leaks around windows, doors, and power outlets with caulk and weather stripping.
- 4 Purchase ENERGY STAR® products.
- 5 Monitor your energy use to spot trends and sudden changes.

2017 Energy-Efficiency Calendar



Start the new year off by being more energy-efficient!
 Each month, try changing your energy-use habits by using the tips below. Keep this calendar on your refrigerator to remind family members to be energy-efficient throughout the year.

	<p>JANUARY</p> <p>Turn off lights when you leave a room.</p>	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <p>Remind family members to use cold water when washing clothes.</p>	<p>MARCH</p> <p>Turn off water while brushing your teeth.</p>
<p>APRIL</p> <p>Ask an adult to help you plant a tree to help shade your home in the summer.</p>	<p>MAY</p> <p>Clean or replace your air filter. You may need to ask an adult to help.</p>	<p>JUNE</p> <p>Keep the thermostat at 78 degrees during summer months.</p>	
	<p>JULY</p> <p>Close curtains and blinds during the day to block the sun.</p>	<p>AUGUST</p> <p>Keep all doors and windows closed while the A/C is running.</p>	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <p>Dry clothes outdoors on a clothesline instead of using the dryer.</p>
<p>OCTOBER</p> <p>Open the refrigerator door for only short amounts of time when necessary.</p>	<p>NOVEMBER</p> <p>Take short showers instead of baths.</p>	<p>DECEMBER</p> <p>Decorate your home for the holidays with energy-saving LED lighting.</p>	

Does Rover really need the A/C or heat on full-blast?

Are Fido and Fluffy running up your home's energy bill? You might be surprised. Pet owners spend more money on energy than those without furry friends at home because they try extra-hard to keep their four-legged companions comfortable.

A Florida Power & Light survey showed that 86 percent of pet owners leave TVs, lights, radios or other electronics running when they're not home in an effort to keep their dogs, cats and birds from getting lonely. And most report that they leave their fans, air conditioners and heaters turned to a comfortable level when nobody's at home except the animals.

A few tips:

- Ask your veterinarian to advise you about a comfortable air temperature for your breed of pet. Then, program your thermostat to set itself to that temperature when the home's two-legged occupants leave for the day and to raise it to the level of human comfort at the end of the work or school day.
- Turn off the ceiling fans. Even when humans are in the house, running a ceiling fan only makes sense when someone is in the same room as the fan. Your pets are unlikely to congregate under the fan. And even if they did, their thick fur would probably prevent them from enjoying the subtle breeze that a fan creates.
- Flick off the lights when you leave a room. Animals generally don't need artificial light.

Post-holiday check: Extension cords gone?

The extension cord you needed to stretch from your Christmas tree to the nearest outlet isn't needed anymore now that the holiday season is over. Same goes for the ones that allowed you to plug in the strands of lights you placed around the house and the extra space heater you put in your guest room.

Pack extension cords up and put them away until next year.

Lots of people leave their extension cords plugged into lamps and appliances all year long. Those people are putting their homes and families at risk because extension cords, when used for extended periods, can overheat, shock someone or even cause a fire.

Extension cords are designed for temporary use — like during the holidays. Their continuous use tends to make them rapidly deteriorate, and that's not safe.

Some tips for extension-cord safety:

- Overloading extension cords makes an already-dangerous situation even riskier.
- Like any cord or electrical device, keep extension cords away from water. They're not safe when they run through snow and ice.



- A cord hidden under a rug or other covering will probably overheat, and that's a fire hazard.
- Plug only one thing at a time into an extension cord.
- Replace worn and damaged extension cords. Do not use them.

Relying on extension cords past the holiday season is a sign that you don't have enough outlets in your rooms. Call a licensed electrician to add some more.

How to safely remove outdoor holiday lights

When you remove your outdoor lights after the holidays are over, do it safely.

- **First, suit up.** Wear thick gloves and protective glasses before doing any electrical work at home. Taking down holiday lights is electrical work.
- **Unplug.** If your strands of lights are still connected to an outlet or to other strands when you start dismantling your holiday display, you could get a shock. Plus, unplugging the lights first will help preserve them for next season.
- **Be gentle.** Don't tug, pull, rip or yank your lights; you could damage them. Take the lights down one section at a time, and use one hand to loop the strands around your elbow.
- **Look up.** If power lines hang close to your roof, note if decorations are touching or tangled in those wires. If they are, do not touch them. If they're in the clear, use extra care when removing them so your hands, tools or lights do not touch power lines. Then, call your electric cooperative and report that low-hanging wire.

Power lines should not be close enough to your roof that you can touch them.

- **Inspect.** Check for broken bulbs, fraying wires, staples — which you should never use to hang lights — and other damage. Take care with damaged lights and wires. Once they're off the house and the trees, throw damaged strands away.
- **Take your time.** Consider that the weather was probably a little bit warmer when you put the lights up in November than when you take them down in January. That could make you want to hurry the chore along so you can get inside where it's warm. But if you rush, you could damage the shrubs and trees where your lights have been hanging for more than a month. Take care not to rip leaves or blossoms.
- **Think about hiring** a roofer or landscaper to hang and remove your holiday lights next year. Professionals have the proper gear and training to safely climb onto your roof and up your trees and to handle electrical wires.

Top resolution: an electrical inspection

Have you ever hired an electrician to do a whole-house safety inspection? Make it a priority in 2017, especially if your home is older.

You could be using light fixtures and outlets that are waiting to burn your house down. The components of overhead lights and behind-the-wall wiring don't last forever, but most homeowners wait until there's a visible problem — like a spark or smoke or if they can't turn something on — before they call an electrician for help.

A fully licensed and insured electrician can inspect outlets, wiring, circuits and appliances and let you know what needs fixing or replacing. In some cases, the inspection might come just in time to save your family from a shock, electrocution or house fire.

Winter is prime time for electrical fires. We run the furnace nonstop, leave the lights on longer, take longer hot showers and tend to stay indoors where

we watch more TV, cook at home and give our electronic equipment a workout.

As we press our home's electrical system into overtime, anything that was waiting to go wrong probably will.

Make your family's safety your top New Year's resolution this year.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month



According to the Consumer Electronics Association, the average household owns 24 consumer electronics products, which are responsible for 12 percent of household electricity use. ENERGY STAR-certified audio/video equipment is up to 50 percent more efficient than conventional models.

Source: EnergyStar.gov

Virtual home-energy audits

By Tom Tate

Is your home using energy efficiently? Unless it was built quite recently to stringent energy-efficiency standards, there are bound to be areas of your home where you can improve efficiency, save money and reduce your carbon footprint.

In a perfect world, your best option is to hire a trained professional to conduct a full-blown, in-home energy audit. This usually involves a detailed inspection of your home's insulation levels, HVAC system, lighting, appliances and exterior space. A professional energy auditor will typically conduct a blower door test to check pressurization and spot hard-to-find leaks in the exterior. In addition, a professional may use a duct blaster to identify leaks in your home's ductwork.

One drawback to the in-home energy audit is finding a time that works with your busy schedule. An energy audit can take several hours when done correctly, which means you might have to take time off from work, farm out the pets, get help with the kids and their after-school activities — and so forth.

Luckily, there is a viable alternative: the online or “virtual” home energy audit. These tools have come a long way over the last 10 years. Today's online energy audits are user-friendly and take only a few minutes to complete. An online energy audit can provide an assessment of your home's energy efficiency and typically provides helpful tips on how to reduce energy waste. The audits utilize sophisticated computer models that typically use local housing types — factoring in the age, size, flooring and construction materials of the home — and local weather data.

I have used several of these audits and found that they typically come within a dollar or two of my actual energy bills when fed the correct information. Amazing! True, the audit won't provide a pressurization test of your home and ductwork, but it is a convenient start.

Here's where to look for online audits:

- Nearby utilities: They will include comparable weather and housing data, so the audit will be more precise.
- The Department of Energy: hes.lbl.gov/consumer

A word of caution: Be careful when using online energy audit software provided by organizations other



If you want to know how energy-efficient your home really is, an “in-person” home energy audit conducted by a certified professional is ideal. But if you can't find the time to hire a professional and schedule the appointment, consider a convenient online energy audit. Source: StockSnap

than utilities, government agencies or universities. Unfortunately, some companies may try to obtain information to sell their own products and services. If you see phrases like, “Learn what your power company does not want you to know,” or the site looks like a marketing page, I'd suggest moving on. Unless you are dealing with a local electric co-op or your trusted utility provider, give no personal information outside of your physical address (for data accuracy) or an email address for receiving a full report.

If an online energy audit doesn't interest you, fear not. The Department of Energy offers a do-it-yourself energy audit section on its website: energy.gov/energysaver/do-it-yourself-home-energy-audits.

The bottom line? Choose the energy audit that works for you, then implement as many of the recommendations as you can. Even taking small steps can add up to significant results, and you'll see the benefits in your utility bills for years to come.

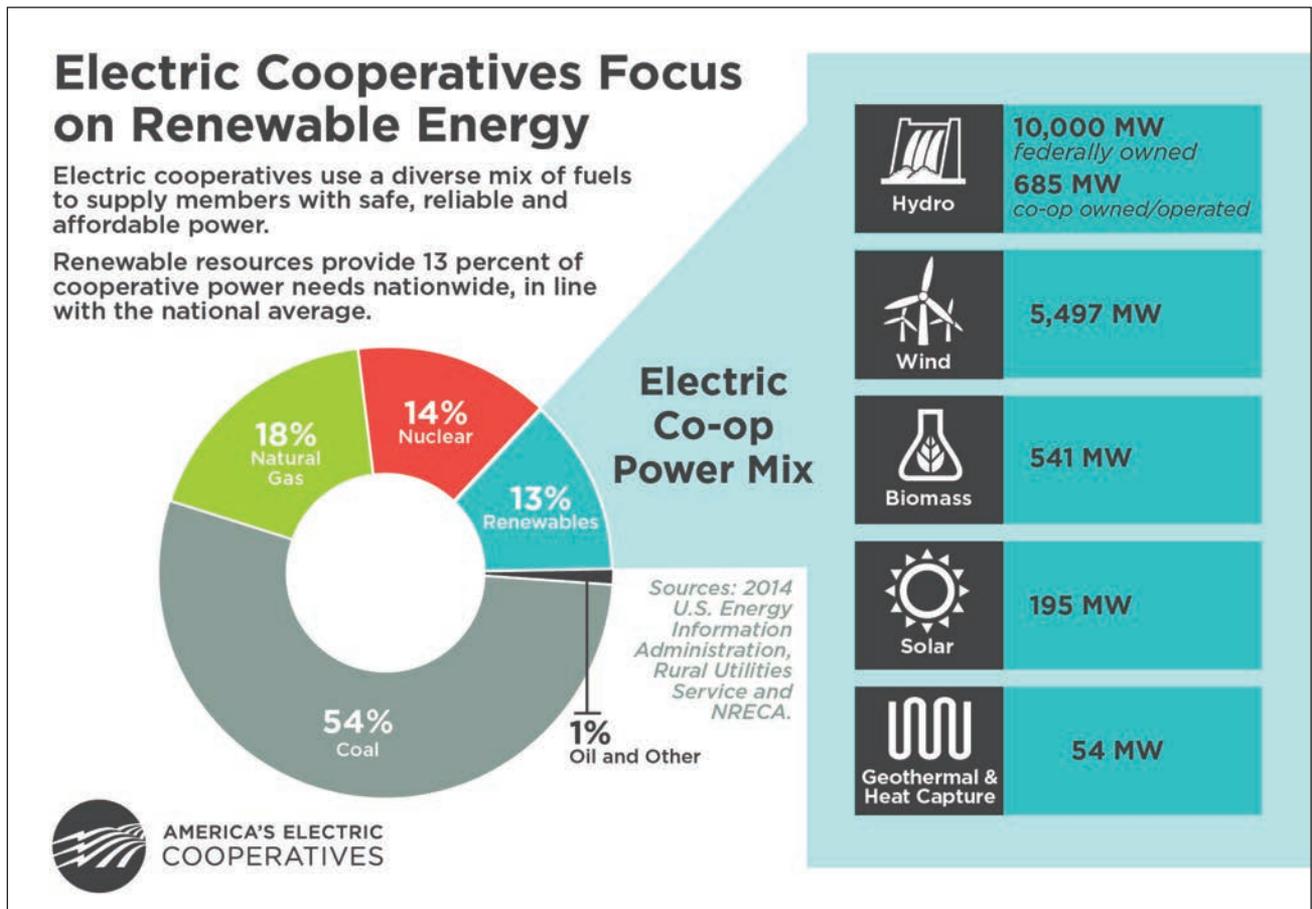
Tom Tate writes on cooperative issues for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.

Save on lighting, save on energy

One of the easiest ways to save money on your utility bill — and do your part for the environment at the same time — is to be smarter about the lighting in your house.

Here are five ways to save energy with smarter lighting choices:

1. Identify the rooms where your family spends the most time. Replace the light fixtures — overhead, undercounter and tabletop — with LED fixtures. They can last up to 50 times longer than a lamp or overhead fixture that takes an old-fashioned incandescent lightbulb. And you don't ever need to change the bulbs. In 50 years, when the fixture wears out, you'll replace the whole unit.
2. Buy lighting products that carry a warranty of at least two years. That goes for LED fixtures, ceiling fans with built-in lights and other products. The warranty is required for lighting products to receive the Energy Star designation.
3. Install ceiling fans. Choose a combo unit that includes both the fan and a light; your electrician can install it in the spot that used to house just the overhead light. Ceiling fans move the air around and make a room feel cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter.
4. Use your dimmers. They're not just for mood lighting; they're for energy savings, too. Most dimmers conserve energy.
5. This one's not new: Turn the lights off when you leave a room. Train your family to do the same. Impossible? Install motion-sensing lights or add a timer to your lights so they turn off automatically when nobody's using the room.





5 DISTRACTED DRIVING STATS YOU SHOULD KNOW



3,179

Number of people killed each year in vehicle crashes involving distracted drivers

(Federal Communications Commission, 2014)



1 in 4

The probability that a vehicle crash involved a cellphone

(National Safety Council, 2014)

60%



Percentage of people who use cellphones while driving

(Harris Poll, 2011)

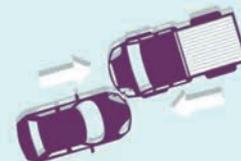
21-24

 Age group most likely to send a text or email while driving

(Distraction.gov, 2012)



4X RISK



How much using a cellphone increases your risk of crashing

(National Safety Council, 2014)

Updating the heart of your home

Tips for an efficient kitchen remodel

Dear Pat: My family is planning to remodel our kitchen. The remodel will be pricey, but we hope to incorporate energy-efficient features that will help reduce our energy costs. What are some things we can do to make sure our kitchen is as energy-efficient as it can be? — Carlos

Dear Carlos: Undertaking a remodeling project in any part of your home gives you the chance to make a space work better for your needs. For many households, the kitchen is the heart of the home, so incorporating energy-efficiency measures here can have a real impact on your energy bills.

Before starting a remodel, consider having a home energy audit completed by a certified professional. This energy assessment can help you identify major efficiency issues in your kitchen that you can address as you remodel. The audit can also identify other large efficiency investments your home may need. For example, upgrading your heating and cooling system and ductwork during the same time as your kitchen remodel could be more cost-efficient than completing two separate projects.

Here are some additional tips and thoughts to consider while you go through your kitchen remodel:

Kitchen layout and design

During a remodel, homeowners often want to expand the kitchen. However, bigger isn't always better — and enlarging the footprint of your kitchen will likely mean higher heating and cooling bills.

The design phase of your project is also when you will decide on placement of your major appliances and kitchen features. Also think about heat sources in your kitchen and how they will affect your refrigerator — placing your refrigerator in a very sunny spot or next to your oven will make it work harder and use more energy.

Appliances

Look for ENERGY STAR-certified refrigerators, dishwashers and freezers to help save energy. In particular, refrigerators that are ENERGY STAR-certified will use about 10 percent less energy than standard models — and up to 40 percent less energy than a refrigerator from 2001. Once it is replaced, don't move your old refrigerator to the garage where it will continue using energy inefficiently.

Lighting

Many remodeled kitchens incorporate lots of windows to ensure a bright, naturally lit kitchen. Using natural light can



Natural lighting combined with overhead and task lighting can make a kitchen functional and energy-efficient. Photo Credit: Flickr user *angryfrench*

make your kitchen feel more open and reduce reliance on overhead lights, but beware of overheating the room in the summer.

In addition to overall lighting, a kitchen needs bright task lighting. Installing individual task lights on separate switches can help minimize the energy you use for lighting. Throughout your kitchen, install ENERGY STAR-rated light fixtures and bulbs.

Kitchen ventilation

Increasingly, homeowners are installing professional-looking hoods above stoves in their remodeled kitchens. Be sure to pick a high-efficiency model sized for your needs and install it so that it vents directly to the outside. Remember that running a hood exhaust fan more frequently than needed can make your heating and cooling system work harder as conditioned air is pulled outside.

Overall comfort

Because the kitchen is often a family's gathering place, installing zonal heat in this space could make sense — you could turn up the thermostat for the kitchen without warming the entire home.

Other ways to ensure that the kitchen is a comfortable room for your family are to address any building envelope issues noted in your energy audit. ■

This column was co-written by Pat Keegan and Amy Wheelless of Collaborative Efficiency. For more ideas on energy-efficient kitchen remodeling, visit collaborativeefficiency.com/energytips.

West Tennessee

Now-Jan. 30 • National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 Exhibit, West Tennessee Delta Heritage Center, Brownsville. 731-779-9000 or westtnheritage.com

Now-March 19 • Winter Seasonal Stargazing, Sharpe Planetarium, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Jan. 2-June 2 • Back to the Moon for Good, Sharpe Planetarium, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Jan. 7-March 3 • “Wild Africa 3D,” CTI 3D Giant Theater, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Jan. 13 • Science of Beer, Pink Palace Museum, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Jan. 14 • Golden Circle Opry, South Jackson Community Center, Jackson. 731-425-8614 or southjacksoncenter@cityofjackson.net

Jan. 15-April 30 • Da Vinci Machines And Robotics, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or discoveryparkofamerica.com

Jan. 21-May 6 • Extreme Deep: Mission into the Abyss, Pink Palace Museum, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Jan. 26 • '70s Dinner Theater, Discovery Park of America, Union City. 731-885-5455 or discoveryparkofamerica.com

Jan. 28 • The Birds and the Seeds Winter Workshops and Seed Swap, Lichterman Nature Center, Memphis. 901-636-2210 or memphismuseums.org

Feb. 3-5 • 13th Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival,

Reelfoot Lake State Park Visitors Center, Tiptonville. 731-253-2007 or reelfoot-tourism.com

A family-fun weekend exploring Reelfoot Lake, the 13th Annual Eagle Festival will offer guided eagle tours (reservations required), children's activities, birds of prey shows, art and photography contests, guided photography tours, hikes and much more, including vendor booths.



Jan. 30-Sept. 2 • “One World, One Sky: Big Bird’s Adventure,” Sharpe Planetarium, Memphis. 901-636-2362 or memphismuseums.org

Feb. 3-5 • 13th Annual Reelfoot Lake Eagle Festival, Reelfoot Lake State Park Visitors Center, Tiptonville. 731-253-2007 or reelfoottourism.com

Feb. 10-12 • “Murder at the Cafe Noir,” The Latta, Selmer. 731-645-2671 or artsinmcnairy.com

Middle Tennessee

Now-Jan. 2 • Christmas on the Cumberland, McGregor Park, Clarksville. 931-645-7476 or cityofclarksville.com/events

Now-Feb. 1 • Snow Village, Amber Falls Winery and Cellars, Hampshire. 931-285-0088 or amberfallswinery.com

Now-June 30 • “Alabama: Born Country,” Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville. 615-416-2001 or countrymusichalloffame.org

Now-July 31 • “Homegrown: Zac Brown Band,” Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville. 615-416-2001 or countrymusichalloffame.org

Now-Dec. 31, 2017 • “Dylan, Cash, and the Nashville Cats: A New Music City,” Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville. 615-416-2001 or countrymusichalloffame.org

Jan. 1 • New Year’s Day First Hike and Feast, Edgar Evins State Park, Silver Point. 931-858-2114 or foeesp.alturl.com

Jan. 6 and 20 • Millersville Bluegrass Show and Jam, Millersville Community Center, Millersville. 615-429-6831

Jan. 8 • Music at Grace Concert Series: Handel's Messiah with Choir and Orchestra, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville. 931-647-6750 or grace-lutheran-church.org

Jan. 12 • Middle Tennessee Christian School Admissions Open House, Middle Tennessee Christian School, Murfreesboro. 615-893-0601, ext. 2, or monicahelton@mtcscougars.org

Jan. 12-14 • "Cheers Live on Stage," Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Jan. 14 • 10th Annual Author Signing, Coffee County Manchester Public Library, Manchester. 931-723-5143 or coffeecountylibrary.org

Jan. 15 • Harlem Globetrotters, Bridgestone Arena, Nashville. harlemglobetrotters.com

Jan. 20 • "Eclipse: The Sun Revealed" Red-Carpet Premiere, Adventure Science Center, Nashville. 615-401-5067 or adventuresci.org

Jan. 21-March 5 • What's Your Story: Explore Storytelling and Oral Histories, Oaklands Mansion, Murfreesboro. 615-893-0022 or oaklandsmansion.org

Jan. 21-March 5 • Wedding Dresses Through the Decades, Oaklands Mansion, Murfreesboro. 615-893-0022 or oaklandsmansion.org

Jan. 24-29 • "A Gentleman's Guide To Love And Murder," Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Jan. 27 • Skate to Hydrate, Ford Ice Center, Antioch. cody@ktkey.org

Jan. 27-29 • "Three Way," Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-832-5242 or nashvilleopera.org

Jan. 29 and Feb. 26 • Gumbo Sunday, Amber Falls Winery and Cellars, Hampshire. 931-285-0088 or amberfallswinery.com

Feb. 3-4 • 12th Annual Southern Invitational Indoor Tractor/Truck Pull, Tennessee Miller Coliseum, Murfreesboro. 615-406-0382 or southernmotorsportspromotions.net

Feb. 4 • A Night of Symphonic Hip Hop, Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Feb. 7-March 28 • 2017 Master Gardener Volunteer Training Course, Lane Agri-Park Community Center, Murfreesboro. mastergardeners-rc.org

Feb. 10-11, 17-18 and 24-26 • "Little Women," Springhouse Worship and Arts Center, Smyrna. 615-852-8499 or ticketsnashville.com

Feb. 14-19 • "The Sound of Music," Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Feb. 17-March 5 • "Sistas: The Musical," Z. Alexander Looby Library and Theater, Nashville. 615-307-1438 or twtp.org

Feb. 18 • Arch 8, Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Feb. 18 • Fight for Air Climb, Fifth Third Center, Nashville. climbnashville.org

Feb. 24 • Natural Beekeeping School, The Barn @ Green Door Gourmet Organic Farm, Nashville. 310-990-5074 or williamshoneyfarm.com/product/naturalbeekeeping-school-2017

Feb. 24 • "Raisin' Cane: A Harlem Renaissance Odyssey," Tennessee Performing Arts Center, Nashville. 615-782-4040 or tpac.org

Continued on page 30

List your events in our Almanac

The *Tennessee Magazine* publishes event listings as space allows, giving preference to events of regional or statewide interest and those that are annual or one-time happenings. The magazine does not publish recurring events such as those held weekly.

The magazine assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of information submitted for publication and advises calling or emailing ahead to confirm dates, locations, times and possible admission fees.

To be included in the calendar, visit our website, www.tnmagazine.org, and fill out the submission form. You can also email listings to events@tnelectric.org or send them to Tennessee Almanac, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224.

Please include the name of the event, where it will be held (both town and physical location), a phone number readers can call for more information and an email or website address, if applicable, where readers can find more information. Event listings must be received at least two months in advance and will be accepted up to a year in advance.

Tennessee Almanac

Continued from page 29

Feb. 26 • Music at Grace Concert Series: Mardi Gras with Les Kerr and the Bayou Band, Grace Lutheran Church, Clarksville. 931-647-6750 or grace-lutheran-church.org

East Tennessee

Now-Jan. 3 • Winterfest Art Show, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Park, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org

Now-Jan. 3 • Lamplight Christmas Wreath Exhibit, Sycamore Shoals

State Historic Park, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org

Now-Feb. 28 • Sevierville's Smoky Mountain Winterfest Celebration, throughout Sevierville. 888-738-4378 or visitsevierville.com

Jan. 1 • 16th Annual Cumberland Gap Polar Bear Dip, 807 Llewellyn St., Cumberland Gap. 423-869-9993 or bicyclemuseum.net

Jan. 7-8 • Old Christmas: Militia Muster at Fort Watauga, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org

Jan. 14 • Traditional Arts Workshop: Watercolor Painting — Winter Landscapes, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org

Jan. 21-22 • Winter Angel Expo Vehicle/Motorcycle Show and National Model Car Show, Great Smoky Mountains Expo Center, White Pine. 423-312-6972 or winterangelexpocarshow.com

Feb. 4-5 • Winter Militia Muster At Fort Watauga, Sycamore Shoals State Historic Area, Elizabethton. 423-543-5808 or sycamoreshoalstn.org



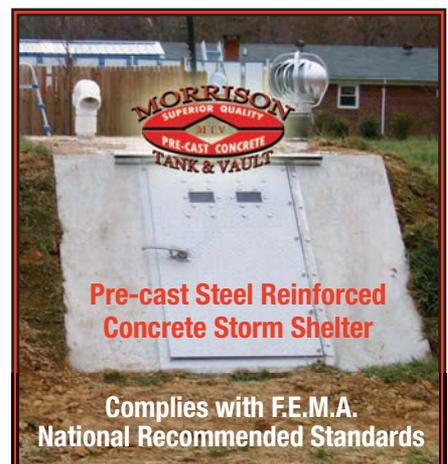
Open hearts can open doors.

When you open your heart and your home to a foster child, you open a door to a brighter future. A door that makes a difference in the life of a child. A door that shows they matter to someone.

If you have enough room in your heart for a child who desperately needs a loving home, please consider becoming a foster parent.

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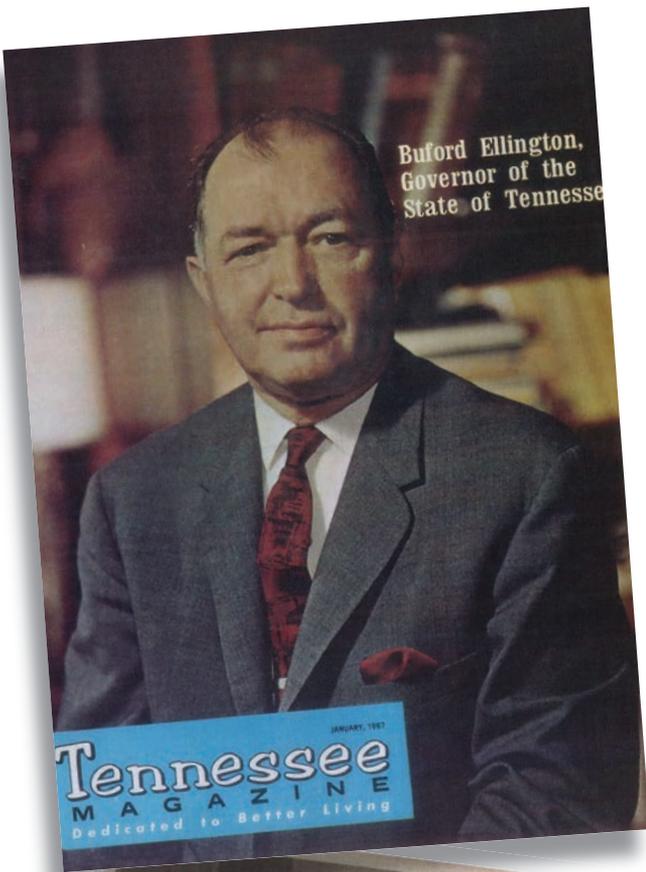
50 YEARS AGO

in the **TENNESSEE** MAGAZINE

For more than 50 years, *The Tennessee Magazine* has been the official publication of our electric cooperatives, keeping member-owners informed about their co-op, showcasing the wonders of electric service and highlighting the special events around the state.

Members thumbing through the January 1967 issue read a recap of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association's annual meeting, which featured a speech by Washington Youth Tour Essay Contest winner Barbara Hinton, and could send away for a collectible color photograph of Tennessee Gov. Buford Ellington.

While our fashions, appliances and recipes have significantly changed since 1958, our mission to entertain, educate and inform our readers has not. Here's a glimpse of what members 50 years ago saw in *The Tennessee Magazine*. View the entire January 1967 edition online at www.tnmagazine.org.



Barbara Hinton, winner of the second annual Washington Youth Tour Essay Contest sponsored by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, reads her winning essay to the large crowd which attended the banquet session during TECA's Annual Meeting. In the foreground is Robert Rooks, Vice President of TECA, who passed away four weeks to the day after this picture was taken.

RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES... DEMOCRACY IN ACTION
 By: Barbara Hinton, Winner
 T.E.C.A. Statewide Essay Contest

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A happy Barbara Hinton receives a letter of certification from TECA President William Towers verifying that she is the Essay Contest winner for 1966 and that she will receive a \$500 scholarship payment from the organization as soon as she is officially enrolled in the college of her choice.

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CUTTING CALORIES

*Begin the
new year
on the
lighter side*

*with a few
retooled old
favorites*



Lighter Macaroni and Cheese

Photograph by Robin Conover • Recipes compiled by Tammy Algood

These “new South” recipes (traditional but with a lighter, healthier twist) are catered toward those who like old favorites but can’t eat the old way!

Garlic French Fries

Yield: 6 servings

1½ pounds Russet potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼-inch strips
2 teaspoons canola oil
½ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
2 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Place the potatoes and oil in a large zip-top bag and massage to coat the strips completely. Set aside while the oven preheats.

Place the potatoes in a single layer on a jellyroll pan lined with parchment paper. Sprinkle evenly with the salt. Bake for 25 minutes, turning after 18 minutes.

Place a large nonstick skillet over low heat and add the butter and garlic. Cook 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat and add the potatoes and parsley, tossing to evenly coat. Sprinkle with the Parmesan and serve warm.

Salisbury Steak and Gravy

Yield: 4 servings

½ cup milk
14 low-salt saltines, crushed
2 tablespoons dried minced onion
2 teaspoons dried parsley
1 pound lean ground beef
1 (12-ounce) jar low-fat beef gravy
2 tablespoons ketchup
¼ teaspoon black pepper

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Coat an 8-inch square baking dish with cooking spray and set aside.

In a mixing bowl, combine the milk, crackers, onion and parsley. Add the beef and mix well. Shape into 4 equal patties. Place in the prepared baking dish.

In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the gravy, ketchup and pepper.

Pour over the patties. Bake uncovered for 50 to 55 minutes and let rest 5 minutes before serving.

Lighter Macaroni and Cheese

Yield: 8 servings

1 pound package corkscrew pasta
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1 cup low-fat milk
1 (12-ounce) can fat-free evaporated milk
1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
½ cup shredded reduced-fat sharp Cheddar cheese
3 ounces fat-free cream cheese, softened
½ teaspoon garlic or onion salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1¼ cups crushed cornflakes cereal
2 tablespoons fresh snipped parsley

Prepare the pasta according to the package directions. Meanwhile, preheat the oven to 350 degrees and coat a 13-by-9-inch baking dish with cooking spray. Set aside.

Place 2 tablespoons of the butter in a Dutch oven over medium heat. When melted, gradually whisk in the flour and cook for 1 minute. Whisk in the milk and evaporated milk until smooth and cook 9 minutes or until slightly thickened. Stir in the Monterey Jack, Cheddar, cream cheese, garlic or onion salt, black pepper and cayenne. Remove from heat and continue to stir until cheeses have melted.

Add the cooked pasta and stir gently. Transfer to the prepared baking dish. In a small bowl, melt the remaining butter in the microwave on low power for 20 seconds. Add the crushed cereal and parsley, stirring to blend. Sprinkle over the pasta and bake for 30 minutes or until golden brown. Let stand 5 minutes before serving warm.

Sauteed Spinach (in place of turnip greens with ham hock)

Yield: 4-6 servings

2 tablespoons olive oil
3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
8 cups packed baby spinach leaves

Place the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. When hot, add the garlic and saute 1 minute. Add the spinach, cover and cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve warm.

Crunchy Pan-Fried Green Tomatoes

Yield: 8 servings

4 green tomatoes, cut into ½-inch slices
½ teaspoon garlic or onion salt
½ teaspoon black pepper
1 cup self-rising cornmeal mix
½ cup panko
½ cup all-purpose flour
4 egg whites
3 tablespoons canola oil, divided

Evenly sprinkle tomato slices with the salt and pepper and set aside. Meanwhile, in a shallow dish combine the cornmeal mix and panko. Place the flour in a separate shallow dish. In a shallow bowl, whisk the egg whites until foamy. Place half of the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat.

Dredge the tomatoes in the flour and shake off the excess. Dip in the egg whites, then dredge in the cornmeal mixture. Fry the slices about 5 minutes on each side until golden brown. Repeat with the remaining oil and tomato slices. Serve warm.

Note: To keep the cooked slices warm, place on a wire rack over a baking sheet in a 200 degree oven.

Grilled Pineapple (in place of sugar-sweet desserts)

Yield: 4 servings

1 large pineapple, peeled and cored
1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted

Preheat the grill to medium. Meanwhile, cut the pineapple in half lengthwise, then cut each half crosswise into 4 (1-inch) slices. Brush with the melted butter. Grill 4-5 minutes or until softened, turning only once. Serve warm.

Continued on page 34

Taste of Tennessee

Continued from page 33

Chocolate Hazelnut Mousse (in place of traditional chocolate pudding)

Yield: 6 servings
 2 cups reduced-fat milk
 2 eggs
 ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa
 ¼ cup sugar
 2½ teaspoons cornstarch
 ¼ teaspoon salt
 ¼ cup hazelnut liqueur (Frangelico)
 ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 3 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
 2 cups frozen fat-free whipped topping, thawed
 2 tablespoons chopped toasted hazelnuts

Place the milk in a heavy saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook to 180 degrees or until small bubbles form around the edge. Do not boil. Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, whisk together the eggs, cocoa, sugar, cornstarch and salt. Whisking constantly, gradually add the hot milk. Return to the saucepan and cook, stirring constantly, over medium heat until very thick and bubbly, around 5 minutes. Return to the mixing bowl and add the liqueur, extract and chocolate. Stir until the chocolate melts. Place over ice for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to cool. Remove from the ice and gently fold in the whipped topping.

Watch us on the web



We Southerners tend to think our food is so delicious because of our traditional cooking techniques. That makes it hard to update our kitchen style for health-related diets, though our modern way of life generally isn't active enough to burn all the calories our forebears used to need. The good news is this: It's the fresh, local ingredients that make food delicious. Watch our video at www.tnmagazine.org to learn how a technique like sauteeing



can maximize the flavors in your seasonal ingredients while minimizing unnecessary calories. To find farmers markets with winter hours and CSAs with winter shares, visit www.PickTnProducts.org.

Cover and chill at least 3 hours. Spoon into dessert glasses and sprinkle with the toasted hazelnuts.

Fresh Mushroom Pizza

Yield: 2 servings
 1½ teaspoons olive oil
 1 (8-ounce) package whole button mushrooms, sliced
 1 (6-ounce) package whole Portobello mushrooms, sliced
 1 tablespoon cornmeal
 1 refrigerated whole wheat pizza crust
 1 Roma tomato, thinly sliced
 ¼ teaspoon black pepper
 3 garlic cloves, peeled and minced
 1¼ cups shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme

Preheat oven to 500 degrees. Place the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, for 8 minutes or until the liquid evaporates. Meanwhile, sprinkle a pizza pan with the cornmeal. Roll the dough into a 12-inch circle and transfer to the pizza pan. Arrange the tomato slices over the crust and sprinkle with the pepper. Add the garlic to the mushroom pan and cook an additional minute.

Evenly spread the mushroom mixture over the tomatoes and sprinkle evenly with the cheese. Bake 12 to 14 minutes or until the cheese melts and the crust browns. Remove from the oven and sprinkle with the thyme. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting and serving.

Try these substitutions for foods you might love but don't love you back

For better health in recipes using:	Substitute:
Avocado (pureed)	Pureed raw peas
Coconut milk	Milk or half-and-half
Cream (in sauces or cold soups)	Plain low-fat yogurt
Cream cheese	Dry curd cottage cheese or soft tofu
1 large whole egg	2 egg whites
Mayonnaise	Half the amount called for with plain low-fat yogurt
Peanut butter	Soynut butter
Salt (in vegetables/soups/stews)	Chopped fresh herbs or lemon juice
Uncooked white rice	Uncooked brown rice, wild rice or quinoa
Vegetable shortening	Coconut butter

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 or contact Algood at 615-837-5160 or tammy.algood@tn.gov.



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SUPER COUPON

12,000 LB. ELECTRIC WINCH WITH REMOTE CONTROL AND AUTOMATIC BRAKE

BADLAND ITEM 61256 61889
60813 shown

SAVE \$453

\$299⁹⁹ comp at \$752.99

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

\$399⁹⁹

73657801

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SUPER COUPON

SOLAR ROPE LIGHT

one stop gardens

ITEM 62533/68353 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 66%

\$9⁹⁹ comp at \$29.97

\$13⁹⁹

16 ft. lit, 22 ft. long

73687066

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SUPER COUPON

RAPID PUMP® 4 TON HEAVY DUTY STEEL FLOOR JACK

PITTSBURGH ITEM 60706/62319 68056 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$80

\$119⁹⁹ comp at \$199.99

Weights 105 lbs.

73663050

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SUPER COUPON

MOVER'S DOLLY

1000 lb. capacity

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

HaulMaster ITEM 60497/93888 shown 61899/62399/63095/63096/63098/63097

SAVE 59%

\$7⁹⁹ comp at \$19.97

\$10⁹⁹

73679103

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WOW SUPER COUPON

4-1/2" ANGLE GRINDER

drillmaster

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

ITEM 60625 shown 95578/69645

SAVE 50%

\$9⁹⁹ comp at \$14.99

\$20.26

73693049

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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, automotive lifts, compressors, floor jacks, saw mills, storage cabinets, chests or carts, trailers, trenchers, welders, Admiral, Badland, Bremen, CoverPro, Creekside, Daytona, Diablo, Doyle, Drummond, Earthquake, Franklin, Hercules, Holt, Jupiter, Lynox, Maddox, Portland, Predator, Quinn, StormCat, Union, Viking. Not valid on prior purchases. Non-transferable. Original coupon must be presented. Valid through 5/1/17.

73707100

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1" x 25 FT. TAPE MEASURE

\$4⁹⁷ VALUE

ITEM 69031/69030 shown

73650810

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SUPER COUPON

6.5 HP (212 CC) OHV HORIZONTAL SHAFT GAS ENGINES

ITEM 60363/69730 shown CALIFORNIA ONLY

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$228

\$99⁹⁹ comp at \$328

\$119⁹⁹

73691609

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WOW SUPER COUPON

3 GALLON, 100 PSI OILLESS AIR COMPRESSORS

A. HOT DOG ITEM 69269/97080 shown

B. PANCAKE ITEM 95275 shown 60637/61615

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 59%

\$39⁹⁹ comp at \$98.62

\$59⁹⁹

73677093

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WOW SUPER COUPON

US*GENERAL 26" 16 DRAWER ROLLER CABINET

ITEM 61609/67831 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$633

\$319⁹⁹ comp at \$952.99

\$369⁹⁹

73709360

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SUPER COUPON

20 TON SHOP PRESS

Pair of Arbor Plates Included

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$215

\$154⁹⁹ comp at \$369.99

\$109⁹⁹

73644290

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SUPER COUPON

1500 LB. CAPACITY MOTORCYCLE LIFT

PITTSBURGH ITEM 69995 shown 60536/61632

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$65

\$69⁹⁹ comp at \$135

\$89⁹⁹

73704199

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SUPER COUPON

3/8" x 14 FT. GRADE 43 TOWING CHAIN

5400 lb. capacity Not for overhead lifting.

HaulMaster ITEM 60658 97711 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 63%

\$21⁹⁹ comp at \$60.95

\$39⁹⁹

73671169

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WOW SUPER COUPON

12 VOLT MAGNETIC TOWING LIGHT KIT

HaulMaster ITEM 69626/69925 63100 shown

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 71%

\$9⁹⁹ comp at \$34.95

\$19⁹⁹

73677207

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SUPER COUPON

CENTECH AUTOMATIC BATTERY FLOAT CHARGER

ITEM 42292 shown 69594/69955

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE 82%

\$5⁹⁹ comp at \$34.99

\$8⁹⁹

73645803

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SUPER COUPON

RETRACTABLE AIR HOSE REEL WITH 3/8" x 50 FT. HOSE

ITEM 93897 shown 69265/62344

Customer Rating **★★★★★**

SAVE \$129

\$59⁹⁹ comp at \$189

\$89⁹⁹

73680994

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Find the Tennessee flag

We 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. Entries must be postmarked by Wednesday, Feb. 1. Winners will be published in the March issue of *The Tennessee Magazine*.

November's Flag Spotters

Thanks for the postcards and emails again this month identifying the correct location of the flag, which was found on the pole on **page 9**.

Winners are drawn randomly from each month's entries. November's lucky flag spotters are:

Nicole Johnson, Medina, Gibson EMC
Marie Garner, Estill Springs, Duck River EMC
Hazel Scarce, Mooresburg, Holston EC



Artist's Palette Assignment for January

Artist's Palette for January — 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 — **January**, 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 Wednesday, Feb. 1.

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 March 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 Poet's Playground

Are you a poet at heart? If so, we would like to see your efforts in *The Tennessee Magazine's* 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 March issue.

Subject: While the theme of your poem must include something Tennessee-related, including the word "Tennessee" is not required.

Age categories: The competition has 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.

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, Jan. 30.

Please note: By entering, you give *The Tennessee Magazine* permission to publish your work via print, online and social media.

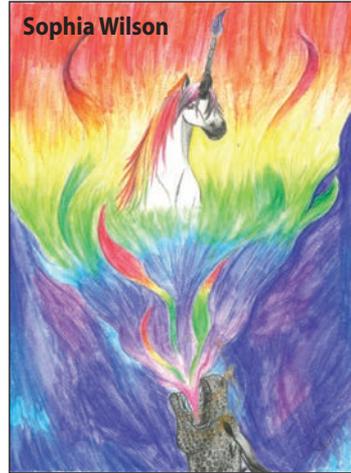
Please enter online at tnmagazine.org or mail handwritten entries to: Poetry Contest, *The Tennessee Magazine*, P.O. Box 100912, Nashville, TN 37224. Please make sure to print your poem legibly. Please keep a copy of your poem as submissions received via mail will not be returned.

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 *November Winners*



Esther Gorber



Sophia Wilson

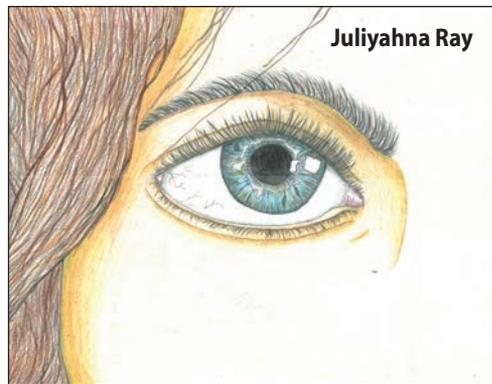


Eve Bratton

WINNERS, 15-18 AGE GROUP: First place: Esther Gorber, age 18, Meriwether Lewis EC; **Second place:** Sophia Wilson, age 15, Cumberland EMC; **Third place:** Eve Bratton, age 15, Cumberland EMC



Violet Thorne

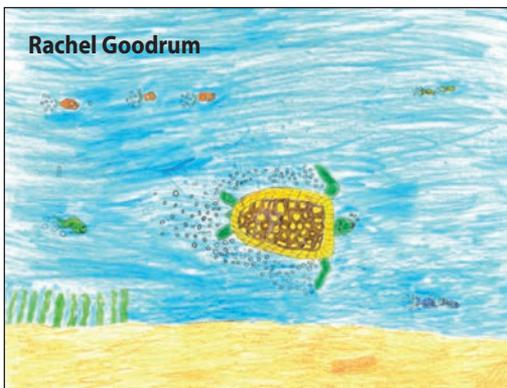


Juliyahna Ray

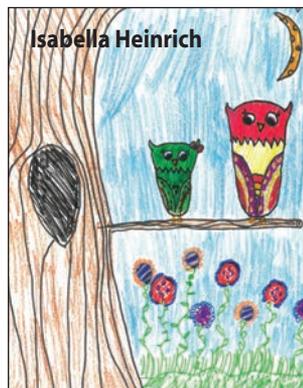


Cheyanna Walker

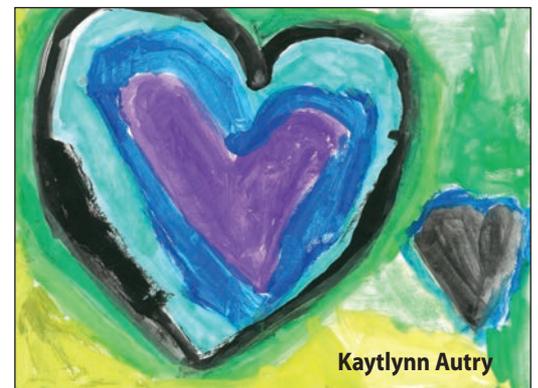
WINNERS, 10-14 AGE GROUP: First place: Violet Thorne, age 14, Tri-County EMC; **Second place:** Juliyahna Ray, age 14, Sequachee Valley EC; **Third place:** Cheyanna Walker, age 14, Middle Tennessee EMC



Rachel Goodrum



Isabella Heinrich



Kaytlynn Autry

WINNERS, 1-9 AGE GROUP: First place: Rachel Goodrum, age 8, Pickwick EC; **Second place:** Isabella Heinrich, age 8, Cumberland EMC; **Third place:** Kaytlynn Autry, age 7, Cumberland EMC

Poet's Playground

See page 36 for details on how to enter
The Tennessee Magazine's monthly poetry contest.

Age 8 and younger

My Tennessee Girl

My little sister is
queen of the cute
And she always gets her way
7 months doesn't mean you are
too little for nosin' around.

She doesn't even notice
how sassy she is
I hope when she grows up
her favorite song is
Rocky Top Tennessee
It is obvious her passies
are just right for her
But I don't need those anymore.

You will never get to know
how precious
She is until she grows.

Her name is Everly Monroe.

— *Olivia Beasley*
Middle Tennessee EMC

Age 9-13

Tennessean Autumn

A rusty truck drives down a dirt
road
Emerald grass rolls from a
sweet chilly breeze
In Autumn has tiptoed
And Summer's intense sun flees
The Tennessee sky so vast
and blue
Mirrors on the wide
twisting river
Dwindling leaves have
a reddish hue
As a fall wind makes them
shiver
Hills from the countryside
fall low
While rocky mountains
tower high
The sunset shines a golden glow
And all Hallow's Eve is nigh

Rose to indigo,
sapphire blue to black
Stars suddenly appear
And as the last light of day
starts to fall back
I dream of yesteryear

— *Olivia Phillips*
Cumberland EMC

Age 14-18

Southern Chronicle

A living emerald face
Wild, unsettled, free
A sprinkle of beige freckles
The first brave men
Who sought to tame this land.
Soft ivory powder on the cheeks
Speckled with ebony
King cotton at his height
His glory marred
By cruelest toil
Crimson tears
The blood of battles
Of myriad lives
Cut short too soon
Shadows in gray
Highlights in gold
A land rebuilt
Old mingled with the new
A warm enfolding smile
Rich hospitality.
Glowing, measureless eyes
Wells of lessons past
Treasuring the hope of
A bright and thriving future.

— *Anna Stuart*

Age 19-22

Green to Green

Soft, in the light of a new home
Step
Tumble
Trail behind your mother
Feel for her affection as your
feet you lift and
Step
Tumble
Topple over under

Fall upon a patch of green so
green that Irish men
Could feel at home

In the light
On the green

As you grow to call this place
your home
Step softly
And with love
In this new, bright world where
Everything that could not be
ours,
Sweet one,
Is yours.

— *Ella Cosette*
Middle Tennessee EMC

Age 23-64

Smoky Mountaintop

I know when I watch you from
behind the haze.
Distant, silent, vigilant.
Does our relentless effort to rule
the landscape amuse you?
Man slices the soil with plow,
plants crop in regimented rows,
rearranges stones to hem fields
or secure some edifice —
house, barn, school, church —
to the earth.
Under your patient gaze
buildings lean, crumble,
leaving stony pox marks —
scars of man's frivolous dreams.
Dreams doomed to overgrown
blackberry and ivy.
Today, your impassive, granite
eye rests upon me.
I, too, will crumble while you
stand steadfast.
Your towering visage hidden by
cling mist.
A covert observer of the
centuries.

— *Ramona Nahorny*
Fort Loudoun EC

Age 65 and older

January in the Smokies

Gone is the fog-scumbled
green cover
of summer mornings and the
kaleidoscope
of October color in the
Smokies.
January snow has saddled
limbs of hickory
and maple and fir. Assaulted
with bullets of ice,
chased the sun into its solar
house above the atmosphere.

Early twilight paints the
scenery black and white.
The moon, a pale gold ghost,
peers out
at midnight through its gray
parka of clouds.
Bunches of underbrush
become interlinked igloos,
making eskimos of sheltering
birds and rabbits.
Shivering deciduous trees
raise their frozen fingers
heavenward, praying in
unison for winter's end.

— *Wesley Sims*

Editor's Note:

These last two poems lovingly explore the beauty of our Smoky Mountains and were received weeks before fires devastated acres of land and countless homes and businesses. Poetry helps us express our feelings about beauty and now can also help us reminisce and heal. Our thoughts go to the victims of the fires.

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Dear Connie Sue,

My relatives have left me multiple antiques. One is a Regina 2 music box with 10 metal records ... still works perfectly. What might be the value of this early record player?

Scott, Dunlap

Dear Scott,

Beginning in the 1880s, Regina made music boxes with single combs to rake against metal records. Sears and Roebuck sold three models in the 1887 catalog that cost from \$8.50 to

\$20. Oak and mahogany cases softened the tone of the metal records. Customers kept the profits flowing for Regina by purchasing records. You may remember that Regina later made and sold vacuum cleaners.

Today, a record player similar to yours with a few records can sell for \$350 to \$1,000 at auction. Specialty shops online and on the street might offer restored models for well more than \$2,000.

Dear Connie Sue,

I was given this cradle when my daughter was born. It is about 3 feet by 1.5 feet. There are no maker's marks on it. It rocks but also has a locking mechanism to hold it stationary. I



would guess the wood is oak since it is pretty heavy. Can you tell me if it is antique and what it would be worth?

Rebekah

Dear Rebekah,

Your cradle was most likely made around 1900. The base resembles late Victorian walnut table legs, so production may have utilized available parts or production lines. The top is oak.

Since parents are advised against using spindle-sided baby beds, antique cradles are typically utilized for displaying dolls. Similar baby beds sell for \$100 to \$175.



Dear Connie Sue,

My father-in-law had this cup all his life. He passed away about 20 years ago in his 80s. The cup would have to be 100 years old. On the bottom it says "Made in Germany." I can't believe the color is still so pretty. Would you tell me if it has any value?

Ruby, Savannah

Dear Ruby,

You math is correct. The "made-in" mark was required on anything imported into the United States after 1914, so the mug has seen 100 years. The image is quite vivid. Maybe he only used the mug as a child. Similar mugs sell for \$6 to \$10.

Dear Connie Sue,

What can you tell me about this moustache cup? My grandmother took it from her trunk along with some other things and told me it had belonged to her father, who died in 1904. Are the numbers in gold on the bottom of the cup significant?



Nava, Munford

Dar Nava,

Mustache cups were first made in England beginning in the 1850s. The shelf inside held the mustache above the liquid and kept the styling wax from melting in the hot drink. It's a sippy cup of sorts.

Before 1871, with introduction of the McKinley Act, the country of origin was not required on imported items. After 1871, the name of the country was required — after 1914, the addition of the words "made in" like the ones on Ruby's cup were mandatory. Your mustache mug without a country of origin was made before 1871.

The revival of decorative facial hair has increased sales of mustache cups, but unless there is remarkable cobalt coloring or heavy gold, the values are still quite low — from \$8 to \$25.

Want to learn more about your antiques?



Send your inquiry with photos to the mailing address or email below. Only published appraisals are free. Private appraisals are available for a fee.

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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, describes these services.

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Point of View

By Robin Conover

*"Chimney Tops at Sunset" by Robin Conover
Canon EOS 5D Mark III, 28-300 mm, at 85mm,
3.5-5.6 L USM lens, ISO 400,
f16 at 0.5 sec., Gitzo tripod*

The Chimney Tops of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park will forever be synonymous with the historic wildfire that began burning on Nov. 23. Officials have arrested two juveniles they believe started the fires by tossing lighted matches along a trail.

I visited the area 11 days after the fire threatened to consume downtown Gatlinburg. From a vantage point along Newfound Gap, I could see, with the aid of a long lens, that the bare rocks on the summit appeared to be charred, as was the forest floor. Most of the trees were still standing, some with obvious fire damage and others without. Numerous dead hem-

locks, standing like bare toothpicks, were visible. These trees were lost to the woolly adelgid pest long before the fire.

Continuing the drive up the mountain from the base of the Chimneys, I stopped at this vantage point near the Morton Overlook. The view gave a different perspective of the disaster. It is from the southeast side looking back toward the Chimney Tops. Gatlinburg is to the northwest.

I realized that on Nov. 28 the winds would have come from the left side of this frame and barreled toward Gatlinburg, carrying red-hot embers with them. Wind gusts reported as strong as 87 miles an hour

fanned the flames from late in the afternoon until well after dark, continuously sweeping burning embers for miles.

This photo was my last shot of the day on Dec. 9. The layer of purplish-gray below the orange sky is a mix of particles of moisture and smoke still hanging in the air. The active fires are still burning on the forest floor as of our press time, though officials say they are more than 95 percent contained.

The park, the people and the cities will heal, but the scars of death and destruction will remain for generations. Please do all you can to help the region. ■

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