



The Perspective

An Editorial by Chief Executive Officer Doug Johnson

Keeping your power on is our number one priority. While severe weather can impact the flow of electricity beyond our control, there are many ways we work proactively to ensure highly reliable power. One important way is by utilizing the latest technology for our industry.

For example, we've recently installed a new Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) system. Monitored 24 hours a day by system operators, our SCADA system "talks" to the computerized equipment in our substations. We receive constant information about the flow of high voltage electricity coming into our substations and how well they're performing in delivering

that power to our consumers.

SCADA benefits you in several ways.

First, by monitoring our system through technology, we can often identify problems and find a solution before an outage even occurs. And because we can remotely operate substation equipment with SCADA, it also speeds outage restoration. For example, if a line technician is working on a trouble spot miles from the substation and needs a switch opened or closed, system operators can handle it so that crews can continue to work.

SCADA also helps determine the location of an outage, its severity and how many people are affected – all good information for ensuring we have the proper staff and resources allocated during an outage.

We've also recently implemented a new outage management system that coordinates with SCADA. As members report outages, this system begins analyzing possible causes. It also indicates what device may be affected.

As we move toward implementing another advanced technology known as "AMR" (Automated Meter Reading), the meters themselves will communicate directly to our outage management system. AMR is scheduled for three-year implementation beginning in 2008, so I will share more about this new technology in a later article.

At Blue Ridge Electric, we're utilizing technologies that will help us meet our promise to you, our member-owners: to deliver the best service, to operate efficiently, and to provide the most reliable power every day of the year.

Technology Improves Reliability

Committee

(Continued from page 1)

Additionally, nominations by petition must be made at least 60 days prior to the 2007 Annual Membership Meeting on June 9. Petitions must be signed by 15 or more members, with each signing his or her name as it appears on their electric service bill. The deadline for petitions is Tuesday, April 10. Petitions will be posted in each Blue Ridge Electric office beside the list of nominees from the Nominating Committee.

Information about board nominees will be mailed during late May to every Blue Ridge Electric member.

The following are qualifications to serve as a director of Blue Ridge Electric:

- Must be receiving electric service from Blue Ridge Electric at their primary residence
- Must not be a close relative of an incumbent director or of an employee of the cooperative
- Their membership must not have been suspended at any time during the 12 months preceding the annual meeting
- Must be at least 18 years old
- Must not be employed by or in a position to financially gain from a competing enterprise of the cooperative or its subsidiary, or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the cooperative.
- The Director-at-Large seat, is reserved to represent the minority membership of the cooperative. Only African American, Native American, Asian, or Hispanic members are eligible for this seat.
- Must not have been employed with the cooperative for the previous six years if a nominee is a former cooperative employee.

The Enlightener



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PowerLine® 1-800-448-2383

(PowerLine is an automated account information and outage reporting system.)

Toll Free 1-800-451-5474

(for members outside the service area)

To report an outage at any time, call one of the numbers listed above.

Office Hours

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Night deposit available

Visit us on the web:

www.BlueRidgeEMC.com



February 2007

Scholarships Available From Blue Ridge

As part of our commitment to supporting local communities, Blue Ridge Electric offers various scholarship and youth leadership opportunities which are now open for applications.

Scholarships

Blue Ridge Electric will award \$15,600 in scholarships to high school seniors and adults within the cooperative's service territory who are seeking a higher education. Scholarships are awarded based on a combination of financial need, community activity, school performance and activities, and personal interviews.

Scholarships available are:

4-Year Degrees

For high school seniors seeking a bachelor's degree, \$10,000 is available in the form of five \$2,000 **Goodman-Hurt** scholarships.

2-Year Degrees

Seven scholarships worth \$5,600 are available to anyone living in the cooperative's service territory seeking a two-year degree. Five \$800 **Goodman-Hurt** technical/vocational scholarships are available.

Cockerham and Suddreth Memorial Scholarships

Also for those seeking a two-year degree, an additional \$800 **Tom Cockerham**

scholarship is available for Ashe County residents and an \$800 **Charles Suddreth scholarship** is available to Caldwell County residents.

(See "Scholarships" on page 3)

Board to Appoint Nominating Committee

At their February board meeting, the board of directors will appoint a Nominating Committee consisting of 12 members who will select candidates to fill four available board seats this year.

Nominating Committee members may not be employees, agents, officers, directors, close relatives, or known candidates to become directors. The committee should have adequate representation reflecting the number of directors from each district, except one member representing the membership-at-large who must be of the minority membership and may be a resident of any district.

The committee will meet March 29 to develop the slate of board candidates for available seats. A list of the candidates will be posted in each Blue Ridge Electric office the week after the March 29 meeting of the board of directors.

(See "Committee" on page 6)



The Trading Post

FOR SALE

Vitamaster exerciser, \$75. Call 336-385-6106.

1996 Dodge van, 93M mi., exc. cond., new tires, central air & heat, rigged for c/g elec. 3-section bed. All records available. Call 828-265-4307.

Large bird cage, perfect for parrots or other large birds, 20" x 18" x 31" h, w/rolling 50" platform. \$125. Call Michael at 828-295-6522.

1986 Fleetwood Cadillac, maroon, ex. cond. New vinyl top, good tires, 119K miles. Asking \$1,000. Call 336-877-3072.

Coleman 5000-watt generator, gasoline engine, 8 hours run on 5 gallons, low oil auto. shutoff, 120/240 volts, \$275. Call 828-297-2325.

1988 Porsche Boxster convertible, clean, nonsmoker, garaged, red/tan, 59,600 miles, \$19,200. Contact Bob at 336-406-3522.

Kitchen counter (Formica), cream white, L shaped, 11'5" x 6'5", w/dbl.

stainless sink, faucets, & more. All or counters \$85. Call 336-982-9341.

Woman's cashmere coat, "Ultima," 100% cashmere, 3/4 length, light tan. Tailored by Mr. Vincent, size M, ex. cond., \$100. Call 336-359-8537.

1999 Pace Arrow Vision motor home, 2 slides, Banks power pack, CB, Bilstien shocks, loaded, 36k mi., V-10 Ford, \$45,000. Call 828-295-4233.

Abercrombie & Fitch shirts, 3 large, long-sleeve polos and 2 large, short-sleeve polos. Paid over \$250. Will take \$75. Call 828-754-3725.

Five-foot Cycle Country ATV snowplow blade and mounting bracket, \$300. Call 828-310-4888

WANTED

Orchard grass hay, good quality, for dairy goats. No mold or other problems. Call 828-758-0906.

Membership matters

NOTICE - Members of Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation are invited to submit ads for the Trading Post. However, no real estate, business, or ads for animals will be accepted. We will place ads in the "Trading Post" on a first-come, first-served basis, and we reserve the right to refuse any ads due to space limitations or questionable content. **Ads will be limited to a maximum of four lines.** We do not accept ads for wood or coal-burning appliances, or electric thermal storage units. Prices should be included on all items. Ads should be mailed to: Cornelia Cornell, Production Supervisor, the Enlightener, Blue Ridge Electric Membership Corporation, PO Box 112, Lenoir, NC 28645.

Scholarships *(Continued from page 1)*

How to Apply

Applications are available from high school guidance counselors, your local community college or at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com.

The deadline for all scholarship applications is March 31.

Youth Tour

Each June, Blue Ridge Electric awards up to four rising seniors from its service area with an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, D.C., where they join other students from across the nation for an educational and fun learning experience. The week-long trip begins June 10 and includes visiting historic sights, learning about rural electrification, meeting North Carolina elected officials and witnessing our government in action. Youth Tour winners are also eligible to apply for several college scholarships.

Individual short essays and interviews determine Youth Tour winners. Applications are available through guidance counselors or online at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com. **All applications must be submitted by March 15.**

Broyhill Leadership Conference

Blue Ridge Electric annually sponsors up to seven students from its service area to attend the highly acclaimed Broyhill Leadership Conference at Queens College in Charlotte. The five-day conference held during the summer is available to any student in grades 10 through 12 nominated by their guidance counselor. Young people from across the nation will participate in the Broyhill Leadership Conference, which is designed to lead students to an understanding and usage of goal setting, motivational techniques, group dynamics, communica-

tion, and cooperation. Applications are available through high school guidance counselors who will also assist with the selection of the Broyhill Leadership Conference winners.

Hicks, Almond Promoted

Sandra W. Hicks has been promoted to director of member services, leaving her former position as Caldwell district and call center manager. Jeff Almond, formerly manager of consumer accounting, has been tapped for the role of Caldwell district and call center manager.

In her new role, Hicks will lead the overall customer service efforts for the entire cooperative. She served as the Caldwell district and call center



Hicks



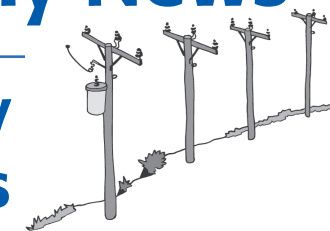
Almond

manager for the past six years and nine years prior to that her sole responsibility was ensuring excellent telephone customer service as call center manager.

Hicks holds an associate's degree in business administration from Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute and will complete work in 2007 to earn *(Please see "Promoted" on page 4)*

Members Only News

Power Reliability Projects



The following quarterly update on projects is provided to keep you informed about investments to improve power reliability.

System Transmission

Work will begin this quarter tying several 100 kv transmission lines into the new West Jefferson substation in Ashe County. The new 230 kv line serving this substation was completed in December.

Ashe District

System improvements are underway to meet growth demands in the Buck Mountain area and projects to improve reliability are beginning

in the Stone Bridge community.

Caldwell District

Projects to provide increased capacity and improve reliability begin this month in Hudson and the Five-Points area.

Watauga District

System improvements for increased capacity began near Blowing Rock Hospital. A reliability improvement project is also beginning on Highway 421 between Boone and Deep Gap.

Alleghany District

Several projects are underway to meet load growth in the Piney Creek area.

Promoted *(Continued from page 3)*

a bachelor's degree in business administration from Gardner Webb University.

Almond joined Blue Ridge Electric in 2004 after serving seven years as vice president and branch manager of First Citizens Bank & Trust Company in Granite Falls. He brings a total of 19 years banking experience and customer service to the cooperative.

Almond is a graduate of Appalachian State University and attended Campbell University School of Law as well as the University of North Carolina School of Banking.

Before joining Blue Ridge Electric, Almond served on the cooperative's Community Leaders Council and is a past chairman of the cooperative's Member Advisory Committee.