

# Membership MATTERS

## Members Only NEWS For Members of Blue Ridge Electric



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*(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 am - 5:00 pm, Monday - Friday  
Night deposit available.

Visit us on the web:  
[www.BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://www.BlueRidgeEMC.com)

## Power Reliability Projects

### Caldwell District

- A transmission line upgrade project is underway to benefit approximately 6,000 Caldwell County members. Increased power reliability will be the result for members being served by the Lenoir, Patterson, Kings Creek, Elks Creek and Omni Supply substations.

### Watauga and Ashe Districts

- Improvements to the electric system in the Sutherland area will result in improved reliability for members in the Meat Camp community, which includes both Watauga and Ashe counties.

### Alleghany District

- Two different projects are underway in the Piney Creek community to improve reliability and increase the capacity to serve additional members.



*Linemen receive training on transmission line construction and repair.*



### ENERGY TIPS

In preparation for vacations, there are the obvious chores that must be done, but there also a few not-so-obvious things that you may want to consider for energy savings and safety while you're away.

- Turn your water heater down to the lowest setting. *(Make sure the power is off to the unit when you adjust the setting.)*
- Turn your air conditioner thermostat up to 78 degrees or higher to reduce your electric bill while you are gone.
- Unplug all electronic devices in case of a storm, and inspect surge protectors to make sure they are properly installed.
- Unplug or disconnect your garage door.

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## Supporting Local Communities

Awarding scholarships and leadership opportunities to deserving students in the cooperative's service territory is one way Blue Ridge Electric supports local communities. Following are this year's winners:

### Goodman-Hurt scholarship winners:

**\$2,000:** Deanna Wagner, West Jefferson, North Carolina State University; Thomas Simon, Jr., Todd, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; Mathew Rector, Sparta, North Carolina State University; and Mary Younce, Lenoir, Appalachian State University.

**\$1,000:** Amber Welch, Warrenton, Western Carolina University; Benjamin Henson, Vilas, University of North Carolina-Wilmington; Jordan Kidwell, Granite Falls, East Carolina University; and Brittany Greene, Lenoir, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill.

**\$800:** Rebecca Howell, West Jefferson, Wilkes Community College; Jennife Renee Driver, Piney Creek, Wilkes Community College; and Hannah Greene, Lenoir, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute.

### Charles Suddreth Memorial Scholarship Winner:

Addison Isaacs, Lenoir, \$800, Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute.

### Youth Tour Winners

Selected for the National Rural Electric Youth Tour in Washington, DC: Kasey Thomson, West Jefferson; Crystal Tsang, Boone; and Samantha Kerley, Ennice.



*Back Row (l-r): Simon, Henson, Kidwell, Younce, Greene, Wagner, Rector, Driver, Howell, Greene, Isaacs  
Front Row (l-r): Tsang, Kerley, Thomson*

**Inside: Read "The Perspective" and learn how Blue Ridge Electric is working to impact the environment and our energy future.**

An Editorial by Chief Executive Officer Doug Johnson



## Impacting the Environment and Our Energy Future

The year 2018 may seem like a long time away, but Blue Ridge Electric is working now to implement measures to meet a new state law designed to impact North Carolina's environment and energy future. Our goal is to implement effective ideas while providing our members with the best value.

Part of our strategy includes coordinating with our wholesale power supplier, Duke Energy, to ensure our power supply portfolio includes a percentage of renewable energy. Our contract for federal hydropower with Southeastern Power Administration also helps add renewable energy to our power supply portfolio.

Another leg of our strategy was joining GreenCo Solutions, a not-for-profit cooperative formed by 24 of the state's electric cooperatives, as a way to pool resources and efforts for energy efficiency initiatives and renewable resources.

Energy efficiency measures will play a large role in helping us meet the new mandate. Blue Ridge Electric has always encouraged good stewardship of energy resources, so I'm excited to tell you about several energy efficiency projects we're planning to offer. Some will be available in 2009 and others will take longer to develop.

- **Energy Efficient Lighting:** Replacing traditional light bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) is an easy, economical way consumers and utilities can make a difference.
- **Water Heating Efficiency Programs:** Water heating reflects a large portion of an electric bill. Simple devices to increase heating efficiency and reduce water consumption will be utilized such as low-flow shower heads and water heater insulation.
- **Community Energy Efficiency Campaign:** A properly insulated home saves on energy usage and costs. We're planning a program to assist members with targeted weatherization efforts such as duct sealing and attic insulation.
- **Promoting Solar Energy:** We are studying a solar program that would include photovoltaics and commercial and residential water heating.
- **Energy Cost Monitor:** This countertop display unit coordinates with our automated meters and will educate members on energy usage and costs.

Blue Ridge Electric is working hard to ensure 10 percent of our energy needs are met through renewable energy resources or energy efficiency measures by 2018 to meet the state's new Renewable Energy and Energy Portfolio Standard (REPS) law. We want to do our part for a cleaner environment and a sustainable energy future. However, achieving the REPS standards will be expensive for all utilities. We're pleased legislators listened and included cost caps to protect consumers from extreme power bill increases. For residential consumers, the annual cost cap is \$10 through 2012, and gradually increases up to \$34 per year in 2018.

As a member-owned electric cooperative, our responsibility is to ensure that electricity is delivered to our members in a highly reliable manner, at the most affordable price possible. We are also committed to being good environmental stewards and offering programs to our members that encourage you to join in this effort.

## Capital Credits Allocated

Your fiscal year 2007 capital credits allocation of the cooperative's total margins is listed on your July bill. This allocation is different from your capital credits retirement check or bill credit you recently received. You are not receiving any money at this time; the allocation is one of the first steps in the retirement process.

The allocation on your July bill is based on the amount of electricity you purchased last year. You receive a portion of the funds back over time whenever the Board of Directors authorizes a return of capital credits.

As a not-for-profit member-owned cooperative, capital credit account balances provide the funds used to operate the cooperative and deliver electric service to members. Capital credits are one of the benefits of belonging to a cooperative.

## Training for Power Reliability

Blue Ridge Electric linemen and other staff recently took part in a training exercise to enhance expertise for working to restore power outages involving transmission lines. Transmission lines are the delivery routes for high voltage electricity sent to Blue Ridge from its wholesale power supplier, Duke Energy. Transmission lines are connected to substations which "step down" the electricity's voltage to a usable level. That electricity then flows out of the substation to distribution power lines for delivery to homes and businesses.

Regarding the training, **Ronnie Jewell**, safety and training manager, said, "Can you imagine climbing that 70-foot pole and stepping out on that ladder in the middle of a stormy night with 30 mile-per-hour winds?" "Restoring power quickly and safely is critical to ensuring reliable power for our members," he said. "With the severe weather conditions we often experience, and mountainous terrain that covers most of our service area, this type of training is very beneficial for keeping our skills at maximum performance, keeping employees safe, and ensuring the most reliable electricity for our members," he added.

## Annual Meeting Overview

Approximately 2,250 members and guests attended Blue Ridge Electric's 71st Annual Membership Meeting at Ashe County High School in West Jefferson on June 14. Re-elected to serve three-year terms on the board were: Martha McKnight representing Alleghany district; David Boone representing Ashe district; David Eggers representing Caldwell district; and Clayton Cooke representing Watauga district. For a complete overview, including comments by CEO Doug Johnson about Blue Ridge Electric's current and future focus, go to [BlueRidgeEMC.com](http://BlueRidgeEMC.com) and click on the "News" tab.



**Eddie Stevens**, Watauga line technician A, steps out on the suspended ladder as **Anthony Ford**, Caldwell line technician A, steadies himself while walking out on the "baker board."

## FOR SALE

**Dining room set**, (table, 4 chairs, hutch, china cabinet), approximately 100 years old, \$1,500 or best acceptable offer. Call 336-657-3943 or 657-8044.

**Grand piano with storage bench**, song books, and a few pieces of sheet music, \$500. Call Nancy at 828-773-7053.

**Two 13" color TVs with remote controls**, \$30 each or both for \$50. Call 336-982-3504 for more information.

**Class 3 trailer hitch for mini-vans**, mounting hardware included, \$100. Call 828-728-4219.

**2005 Ford F-150**, red, 4 dr., 4WD, V-8, auto., 17" wheels, 15K miles. Asking \$17,300 OBO. Call 828-728-7258 or 729-5000.

**Singer serger**. New, in carton, paid \$550, asking \$300. Call 828-963-2385.

**Hesston, Model 530 baler**, ready to work, \$5,500. Call 336-982-9531.

**Antique shoeshine stand**, two seats, marble base; great for home theater or pool room, \$1,500. Photos available. Call 336-877-2303.

**Jewelry**. Call 828-297-5432.