



BLUERIDGE
electric membership corp.
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Membership MATTERS



Members Only NEWS

~ For Members of Blue Ridge

Meet Your Board Candidates

You have the opportunity to meet the candidates for your cooperative's Board of Directors during "Meet the Candidate" forums being held in each local Blue Ridge Electric office on the following dates:

Caldwell District	May 12	Watauga District	May 14
Alleghany District	May 18	Ashe District	May 21

Each forum begins at 7 p.m.

Rep. Cullie Tarleton met with Blue Ridge Electric President Kenneth Greene, of Ashe County, and Secretary-Treasurer Joy Coffey, of Watauga County, as cooperative officials recently traveled to Raleigh with other North Carolina electric cooperatives as part of the group's governmental relations efforts. Cooperatives advocate for issues that benefit the communities they serve, especially to keep the cost of electricity affordable. Rep. Tarleton has worked tirelessly on many different issues to benefit those he represents in Watauga and Ashe counties.



Rep. Tarleton Meets with Blue Ridge Electric

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

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Use a programmable thermostat to vary your home's temperature based on your schedule. Studies have shown that you can save one to three percent of heating and cooling costs for every degree you set your thermostat back and leave the entire day or an average of one percent for an eight-hour set-back.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



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Members See Huge Savings with Co-op Connections® Card

Members using their Blue Ridge Electric Co-op Connections® card are realizing huge savings at pharmacies and participating local businesses through this special card only available to cooperative members.

The Co-op Connections card is a Touchstone Energy® program involving electric cooperatives across the country that allows card holders to receive discounts from any participating business or pharmacy across the nation. Blue Ridge Electric first sent its members Co-op Connections cards in 2006 when it launched the program. More than 100 local businesses across the cooperative's service area continue to offer discounts unique to their business or service to card holders.

In December 2007, the card was resent to Blue Ridge members because a valuable new feature was added: local and national pharmacies agreed to offer 10 to 60 percent savings on many prescriptions at over 48,000 independent and national pharmacy chains including CVS, Walgreens, Wal-Mart, and Target.

To date, Blue Ridge members have used their Co-op Connections card to fill more than 8,000 prescriptions and saved more than \$325,000. This is an average savings of 35 percent!

To locate area pharmacies, go to www.locateproviders.com and search by using your zip code, telephone number or pharmacy name. Look up discount prescription prices at www.rxpricequotes.com.

Many other discounts are available at local restaurants and retail stores displaying the Co-op Connections sign. To locate the most current listing of participating businesses, go to www.BlueRidgeEMC.com and click on the Co-op Connections link at the top of any page. You can also find a full list of participating businesses nationwide at <http://co-opconnections.com>.

"We hope all our members take advantage of the Co-op Connections card and the savings it can provide," said Renee Whitener, director of public relations.

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THE Perspective

National Budget Will Raise Electricity Prices

At Blue Ridge Electric, our mission is first and foremost to deliver affordable and reliable power to our members. It's why electric cooperatives were created, and it's our most important commitment to you. We are now experiencing, however, one of the most challenging times in our history to maintain affordability. The cost pressure is primarily due to four key philosophical shifts that are driving renewable energy portfolio standards, an anti-coal movement, and a tax on carbon (coal) as proposed in President Obama's recent budget. Over the next several months, I will address each of these areas, but for this month let's look at the proposed carbon tax (cap and trade plan).

President's Obama's budget plan will increase electricity prices for consumers as it seeks to raise \$80 billion a year, starting in 2012, by adopting a "cap-and-trade" system where limits would be set (capped) on how much carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases that industries can emit. Industries such as electric generation utilities would incur significant additional costs to buy allowances for carbon emissions. These cost increases would then be passed on to distribution utilities like Blue Ridge Electric. The President's budget projects the plan will raise \$645 billion from these sales between 2012 and 2019.

Unfortunately, this plan will cause substantial electric rate increases for states that receive a lot of electricity from coal generation. The hardest hit will be states like North Carolina where

almost 50 percent of our power is generated from coal plants. While we are currently evaluating the estimated rate impacts for this plan, we estimate it could mean an additional retail rate increase of 15 - 20 percent depending on the price of emission allowances.

While we support a long term effort for our nation to achieve a cleaner environment and to become more energy independent, we differ from some of those crafting legislation on Capitol Hill on how to achieve these goals. We believe we should consider the best interests of consumers by balancing the cost to consumers while achieving environmental goals over a longer period of time.

One of the most concerning points about the proposed plan is that most of the money generated from this plan would be used for government programs and initiatives, budget shortfalls, and tax relief. We do not believe it's the best solution for a carbon emissions tax which produces revenue for the federal government to be used for other programs. In essence, this plan will extract significant amounts of money from the south and mid-west areas of the country and redistribute it to other regions.

Now more than ever, we should all be concerned about what rising electricity costs will do to the average family and to additional manufacturing job losses in North Carolina. Let me assure you that Blue Ridge Electric will advocate strongly for a balanced solution that keeps in mind cost impacts for our members. But we need your help to be



An Editorial by Chief Executive Officer Doug Johnson

successful. It will take everyone working together and making our voices heard on Capitol Hill to keep electricity reasonably priced.

Please join with us to ask our elected officials in Washington, D.C., to balance any votes they cast about electricity with the need to keep it affordable. Diversifying our nation's energy portfolio, reducing carbon emissions, and making our country more energy independent are critical issues; however, we need to take a longer-term approach that doesn't put so much additional financial strain on North Carolina families and businesses at this time.

We're asking all of our members to use the web site or toll free telephone number created by the North Carolina electric cooperatives to allow consumers to easily and effectively contact our representatives in Congress. Visit www.findabalancedsolution.com to find a sample letter to which you can add your own comments or send as is. You can also call the toll free **1-877-40-BALANCE** to contact your elected officials.

Doing the right thing for the environment is important. As a cooperative, we believe doing the right thing for our member's pocketbooks is equally important. We can balance environmental goals with affordable electricity. We urge you to join with us in this goal by visiting findabalancedsolution.com and make your voice heard.

More News



An Appalachian Summer Festival Finale Concert: **Kenny Loggins**

Join us at the Holmes Convocation Center on Saturday, July 25. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Ticket Order Form

Tickets may be ordered from ASU by phone, FAX, mail, or at www.BlueRidgeEMC.com:

- For mail orders, cut (✂) this form out and send it along with your check, money order, VISA® or MasterCard® number to:
Farthing Auditorium Box Office
Appalachian State University
PO Box 32057
Boone, NC 28608-2057
- For phone orders using your VISA® or MasterCard®, call toll free: 1-800-941-2787 or (828) 262-4046 in the Boone area. Hours: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday - Friday. **Blue Ridge members - to receive your discount, have your electric account number ready.**
- FAX this order form with your VISA® or MasterCard® number to: (828) 262-2848.
- To order tickets over the Internet, go to www.BlueRidgeEMC.com and click on "ASU Concert Tickets."

Name _____ State _____ Zip _____
Address _____
City _____
Blue Ridge Electric account number (required for discount) _____
Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____
Adult tickets x \$25 = \$ _____
Children's tickets x \$ 5 = \$ _____
(12 years & younger)
Subtotal \$ _____
Handling Charge \$ _____ \$2.00
Grand Total \$ _____

All tickets must be purchased through ASU.

An Appalachian Summer Festival Finale Concert

with Kenny Loggins
Saturday, July 25 at 7:30 p.m.

Holmes Convocation Center, Appalachian State University
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Adult tickets with Blue Ridge Electric member discount - \$25 (regularly \$30)
Children's tickets - \$5

*All tickets must be purchased through ASU

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