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Between the Lines

News from your community

A season of giving and eating

Whether it's "chestnuts roasting on an open fire" or you've "brought some corn for popping" or maybe you are waiting for someone to "bring us some figgy pudding," I know your household is getting ready for the holiday season — a season that is focused on spending time with family and reflecting on the year as it comes to a close.

As we grow older, we learn that it is far greater to give than to receive, no matter the occasion. I do adore seeing the youngest eyes of our family light up as they race toward the Christmas tree each year. The only eyes brighter in the room, though, are those of the ones who gave the presents.

The figurative eyes of your electric cooperative also light up through giving, but not just on Christmas morning. Each and every day of the year, your co-op gives back to the community. Through our efforts to provide you with safe and reliable energy, promote economic development and support local schools, Tri-State EMC is constantly focused on giving. It isn't about the material items, though. It's about making the communities we serve great places to live, work and raise a family.

The season, much like the lyrics at the beginning, also heavily revolves around food. Like me, I'm sure you can think back on many holiday memories associated with eating.



By Stacy Chastain
General Manager,
Tri-State Electric
Membership
Corporation

Maybe it is the breakfast held every year at your grandmother's house, the cookies you made with your mom or sitting around the kitchen table and playing card games with your cousins as you snack on leftovers. Many memories made and to come are tied to food.

Food is a big part of this very magazine. I hear frequently from readers of *The Tennessee Magazine* about the recipes that run in every issue, and I encourage you to visit tnmagazine.org where you can find years of recipes to continue making memories with and giving to your loved ones.

This special season — and the rest of the year — you can be confident that the team at Tri-State EMC is here to ensure that you have the energy you need for the moments that matter most.

The employees of Tri-State EMC join me in wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season and many blessings in the coming new year.

This institution is an equal-opportunity provider and employer.

Operation RoundUP year in review

While a few cents might seem insignificant on their own, when combined with donations from others, these member contributions are actively changing lives within your community.

Headed by a seven-member volunteer board, the foundation distributes funds raised through Operation RoundUP, Tri-State EMC's philanthropic program in which members round up their power bills to the next dollar.

Tri-State EMC's Operation RoundUP Foundation has awarded a total of \$915,000 to local nonprofits, charities and school systems.

For more information on grants, visit tsemc.net and click on the Operation RoundUP tab.

Do you want to see how your change can change lives? Sign up today to participate in Operation RoundUP by calling 706-492-3251.

Some of the 2024 recipients:

Community Meal
Copper Basin Crisis Center
Copper Basin Elementary Snack Pack
Copper Basin Senior Center
Faith Presbyterian Church
Fannin Christian Learning Center
Fannin County Brain Injury Support Group
Fannin County School System Children's Fund
Fannin County Shop with a Cop
First United Methodist Church Pastor's Discretionary Fund
Mine City Baptist Church
Snack in a Backpack

Tri-State EMC wishes everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

Tri-State EMC will be closed on the following holidays:

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2024

Wednesday, Dec. 25, 2024

Wednesday, January 1, 2025

If you experience a power outage or require emergency service at any time, please call 706-492-3251.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

If you're planning to purchase electronic gifts this holiday season, look for the Energy Star label, which indicates higher energy efficiency performance. Electronics that receive the Energy Star rating are up to 25% more efficient than standard products. This holiday season, give the gift of energy savings with Energy Star-rated electronics and equipment.

Source: energystar.gov

Tri-State EMC staff teaches preschools about electrical safety

Tri-State EMC recently visited Fannin County Preschool to talk to the students about electricity.

Tri-State EMC loves teaching its members about electricity — and most importantly, how to be safe around it. It's never too early for children to begin learning how to stay safe around electricity, so Tri-State EMC offers an electrical safety program to preschools in the co-op's service area.



Students are provided coloring books featuring Louie the Lightning Bug and all kinds of fun pictures to color that describe what runs on electricity inside a home. The books also have information on how electricity is made and transmitted and many of the different ways in which electricity is used. In addition, the coloring books stress the importance of staying safe around electricity.

Tri-State EMC employees review the coloring book with the preschool students while also showing them many of the tools that groundmen and lineworkers use when working. Students get to try on lineworkers' safety gloves and hard hats, and they get to see a bucket truck in action.



Above, Tri-State EMC IT Manager David Lewis with students. Top left, Tri-State EMC lineworkers Brian Arp, Jason Cook, Chuck Thomas, Jim Callihan, Jerod Petty, Joel Mann and Chris Johnson with students. Bottom left, Tri-State EMC lineworkers Jackson Weeks, Joseph Crowe, Zach Wehunt Rodney Patterson, Darrin Queen, Chuck Thomas and William McClure with students. Below, students get to see a bucket truck in action.



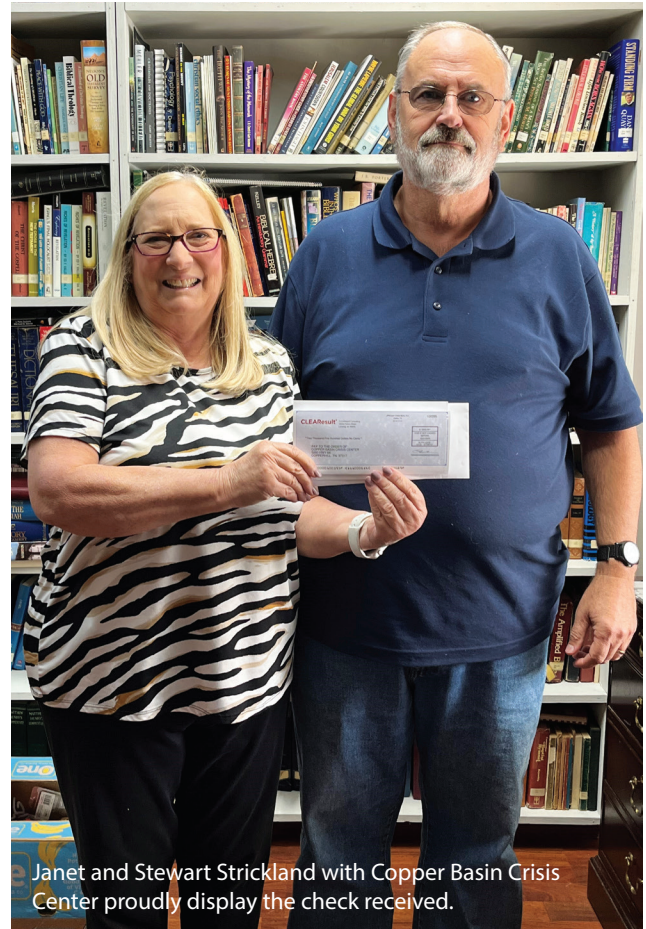
Tri-State EMC, TVA partner to deliver \$10,000 in local community assistance

In partnership with the Tennessee Valley Authority, Tri-State EMC is proudly awarding \$10,000 to Copper Basin Crisis Center, Fannin Children's Fund, Hiwassee Dam Schools and Snack in a Backpack through TVA's Community Care Fund.

The partnership enables local power companies to identify organizations or local initiatives for which they can seek matching-funds support from TVA. The work or mission of recipient organizations must align with one of TVA's five Giving Pillars: education; health, hunger and housing; workforce development and training; environment and community stewardship; and disaster relief and emergency response.

Now in its sixth cycle, the TVA Community Care Fund will provide up to \$2 million to nonprofit agencies this year, supporting the vital work agencies perform to serve communities throughout TVA's seven-state service territory.

"TVA has stood on its mission of service for more than 91 years, and one of the many ways we carry that mission out is through our collaboration with local power companies to tackle challenges faced by families and businesses across the Valley," said Dan Pratt, TVA senior vice president of customer and community relations. "The Community Care Fund is a wonderful example of how our public power partnerships can effectively deliver tangible, difference-making benefits at a local level."



Janet and Stewart Strickland with Copper Basin Crisis Center proudly display the check received.

The Community Care Fund is part of a broader effort by TVA and local power companies to support communities with resources, programs and assistance



Snack in a Backpack volunteers take a break from packing food to display the check received. Pictured here are some of the volunteers who help pack weekly meal bags. From left are Rose Schueneman, Bethany Higgins, Debby Beck, Dave Tickner, Barbara Davenport, Vicky Mauck, Joanne Campbell and Mack Campbell.

to reinforce the strength of public power across the Tennessee Valley.

The Tennessee Valley Authority is a corporate agency of the United States that provides electricity for business customers and local power companies serving nearly 10 million people in parts of seven Southeastern states. TVA receives no taxpayer funding, deriving virtually all of its revenues from sales of electricity. In addition to operating and investing its revenues in its electric system, TVA provides flood control, navigation and land management for the Tennessee River system and assists local power companies and state and local governments with economic development and job creation.

Copper Basin Crisis Center

Copper Basin Crisis Center provides food as well as personal health, hygiene and cleaning items to the needy in its service area. The grant will be used to buy and distribute food to about 400 families that come to the Copper Basin Crisis Center each month. These families reside in North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia.

Snack in a Backpack

Since 2009, Snack in a Backpack continues to work hard feeding youth and fighting hunger in Fannin County. Over 500 children were served each week during the 2023-2024 school year, and 634 were served each week during the 2024 Summer Meal Program. The very generous donation from the TVA Community Care Fund will go directly toward food purchases for children of food-insecure families. Weekend meal bags, which fill the critical void between noon on Friday and breakfast at school Monday morning, are provided to children pre-K to high school. With the help of supporters like TVA and Tri-State EMC, Snack in a Backpack will



Sheena Rymer with the Fannin Children's Fund is pictured holding the check.

continue to provide nutritious food for hundreds of children in our area.

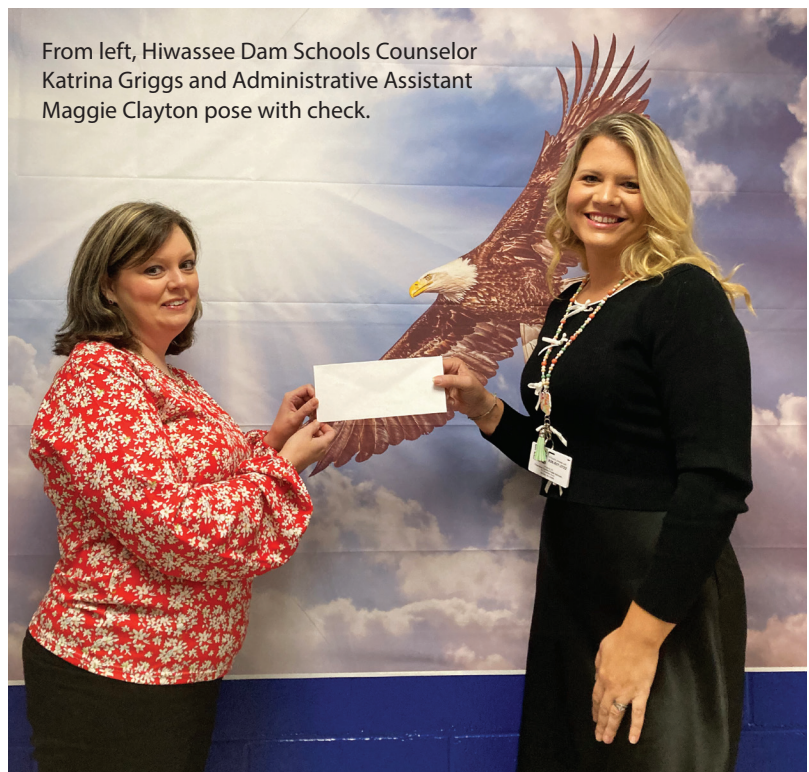
Fannin Children's Fund

Fannin Children's Fund is an organization located within the school systems that assists families who are struggling financially to afford some of the basics for their

children such as food and clothing. The fund is also used so students are able to participate in fun things such as sports or field trips. Counselors and teachers who are around the children daily use money from this fund to assist on an as-needed basis.

Hiwassee Dam Schools

Hiwassee Dam Schools serve a low socioeconomic population and find that each year families struggle financially to afford the basics for their children such as food and clothing. The Hiwassee Dam needy fund tries to reach as many people in the school system as possible.



From left, Hiwassee Dam Schools Counselor Katrina Griggs and Administrative Assistant Maggie Clayton pose with check.

What is mutual aid, and why does it matter?

By Jennah Denney, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association

Electric cooperatives employ a variety of methods to reduce the likelihood of power outages, from regular tree trimming and equipment maintenance and repairs to local grid updates. But outages do occur, and when they do, co-ops are ready to respond.

Another way co-ops prepare for major outages and disasters is through mutual aid, which is a collaborative approach to emergency planning. The mutual aid model allows electric co-ops to help each other out during times of need. This approach permits co-ops to “borrow” restoration workers from other co-ops, thereby increasing the workforce response to areas impacted by a major outage event. It’s essentially about neighbors helping neighbors, even when

Disaster response and mutual aid are managed by electric co-ops as well as the co-ops’ statewide organizations like the Georgia Electric Membership Corporation and Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, which can also assist with coordination among states, helping ensure the necessary personnel and equipment that are the key ingredients of the mutual aid recipe. These efforts require effective logistics management and experts who fully understand resource allocation and have the know-how to respond under pressure.

During major outage events, a variety of equipment is necessary to complete repairs, including bucket trucks and other specialized vehicles, utility poles, transformers and wires. Skilled lineworkers, tree trimmers, damage assessors and other key personnel are also often shared among co-ops. These experts provide critical skills and manpower to speed up the restoration process.

Because the national network of transmission and distribution infrastructure owned by electric co-ops has been built to federal standards, line crews from any electric co-op in the U.S. can arrive on the scene ready to provide emergency support and secure in their knowledge of the system’s engineering.

Today, mutual aid continues to be a vital part of how electric co-ops operate and serve members. The goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible after a major outage event, and by sharing resources, co-ops can significantly enhance their response capabilities.

Tri-State EMC employees Jackson Weeks, Drew Earley, Dewayne Oneal, Tyler Watkins, Darrell Moore, William McClure, Travis Sisson, Nathan Heaton and Jesse McKeral with Harry Avery from Jefferson Energy Cooperative.



those neighbors are fellow co-ops located hundreds of miles away.

Electric co-ops operate according to seven Cooperative Principles, and Principles No. 6 and No. 7, Cooperation Among Cooperatives and Concern for Community, are directly connected to the mutual aid model.

The concept of mutual aid originated with the rural electrification efforts in the 1930s. From the very beginning, electric co-ops relied on each other to assist in times of need, and mutual aid provides an essential safety net in times of crisis.

Mutual aid ultimately benefits the co-op’s members. During major outage events, co-ops can increase their workforce and respond more quickly, leading to shorter outage times for members.



HOLIDAY FUN WORD SEARCH

Can you find all the words associated with holiday fun in the puzzle below? Use the word bank to check your work.



WORD BANK

Jingle bells	Santa Claus	Snowman
Candy cane	Mittens	Hot Chocolate



N	H	C	H	P	B	D	H	S	V	G	Z	H	T	M
A	C	C	F	Z	Z	A	T	F	N	V	D	Q	Z	Y
M	H	L	V	Y	M	J	N	P	D	E	T	V	F	S
W	P	W	H	F	W	I	H	K	S	C	T	G	B	K
O	Z	K	D	Z	L	N	O	K	K	H	Q	T	C	F
N	F	I	O	U	R	G	T	F	C	L	P	E	I	L
S	S	V	S	U	A	L	C	A	T	N	A	S	C	M
Z	C	V	P	C	E	E	H	R	P	W	U	A	Z	Z
F	C	F	J	C	H	B	O	G	C	Y	N	G	V	E
G	M	V	X	D	L	E	C	V	N	D	T	S	F	W
Y	A	X	V	N	U	L	O	H	Y	V	C	L	U	A
H	G	V	L	L	X	L	L	C	M	J	M	C	I	U
P	J	Y	F	E	R	S	A	Q	E	Y	G	H	C	A
D	W	O	R	D	T	N	T	Y	H	X	Q	L	E	S
U	W	H	R	U	E	V	E	B	Y	B	F	L	W	R



HAPPY HOLIDAYS
FROM THE ENERGY
EXPLORERS!