



Tri-County
EMC

CURRENT LINES

NOVEMBER 2024

THIS MONTH'S NEWS

Hurricane Helene, [page 1](#)

Co-op Holds 85th Annual Meeting, [page 2](#)

Youth Tour Alumni Update, [page 3](#)

Space Heaters vs. Heat Pumps, [page 4](#)

HURRICANE HELENE IMPACTS SOUTHEAST

Hurricane Helene is a storm that many Georgians will remember for years. After making landfall on Thursday, September 26, Helene tore through the southeast, bringing 140 mph winds and massive flooding.

While the storm curved more eastward than initially predicted, Tri-County EMC saw impacts of the historic storm across its system. Tri-County's outages peaked around 8 AM on September 27, when approximately 5,200 meters lost power, affecting members in Jones, Baldwin, Putnam, Twiggs, and Wilkinson Counties. Damage included broken poles, downed power lines, and damaged fiber, causing internet outages for Tri-CoGo subscribers. 32 Tri-County linemen and contractor crews from Helton Electrical Services, Pike Electric, and Georgia Right-of-Way got to work as soon as conditions were safe. By 11:30 PM that night, nearly all outages on the cooperative's system had been restored.

"The Tri-County EMC service area is fortunate to have received minor damage compared to the widespread devastation in parts of Georgia and North Carolina," said CEO Ray Grinberg. "At peak, Georgia EMC reported 435,000 outages statewide, with some systems at or near 100% out."

The cooperative model promotes "Cooperation Among Cooperatives", meaning that co-ops work together when local, statewide, or national disasters strike. On September 28, Tri-County sent a south district line crew to Little Ocmulgee EMC in Dublin and a north district line crew (pictured) to Altamaha EMC in Lyons, where they further assisted with storm restoration efforts. Crews continued swapping until work was complete and systems were completely restored.



CO-OP HOLDS 85TH ANNUAL MEETING

On October 17, Tri-County EMC hosted its 85th Annual Meeting at the Tri-County office in Gray concluding the 2024 Board of Directors' Election. Voting online or by paper ballot, over 1,200 Tri-County EMC members participated in their cooperative's election process. Billy Jerles, Tri-County EMC Board Attorney, reported the following election results: Incumbents Chap Nelson (Post 2, District 1), George "Buck" Comer (Post 2, District 2), and Edward Walker (Post 2, District 3) were re-elected to serve three-year terms on the Tri-County EMC Board of Directors. The 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes were approved with a majority vote. (58655001)



Brenda P. Green

Beginning her address, Brenda P. Green, Chairman of the Tri-County EMC Board of Directors, reported that the cooperative is in sound financial health and good standing with its financial partners. Green informed viewers that the cooperative's goal is to provide its members with safe and reliable power. Green also emphasized that policies

passed in Washington, D.C., impact what home and business owners pay for power. "The Environmental Protection Agency's new power plant regulation threatens an electric cooperative's ability to keep power costs down by restricting the operation of natural gas and coal generation needed to provide reliable power," said Green. "The National Rural Electric Cooperative Association has filed a lawsuit on behalf of EMCs nationwide to petition for a review of the new power plant rules. While the lawsuit proceeds, Tri-County continues to maintain a diversified wholesale power portfolio to ensure reliability in the most challenging times." Green reported that Plant Vogtle Units 3 and 4 are online and operational, providing members with safe, reliable, and emission-free nuclear energy. On a local level, Green announced that Tri-County's new Lake Oconee substation is expected to be in service in December. The substation will provide the cooperative with the capacity to meet increased demand. Green wrapped up her address with a message to the younger generations that may be unaware of the cooperative story. "Tri-County is owned by the members, and we exist to serve you," said Green. "Board members are your elected representatives. We welcome your comments, suggestions, and ideas."



Ray Grinberg

To begin his address, CEO Ray Grinberg stated, "Tri-County EMC is more than wires, poles, electricity, and fiber. It's an organization of dedicated, hardworking people that see a purpose in making their communities a better place to live." Grinberg expressed gratitude to the Tri-County EMC and Tri-CoGo personnel who played a vital role in power restoration following Hurricane Helene. Grinberg also announced that Tri-County EMC is taking necessary measures to keep up with the growth of its service area and how to serve its members best. "The cooperative has outgrown its facilities in Eatonton and is in the process of purchasing property in Putnam County to construct a new office that will accommodate both Tri-County EMC and Tri-CoGo," said Grinberg. "The new location will allow for faster response to more of our members and help us better serve those in need."



Greg Mullis

Tri-CoGo COO Greg Mullis gave a brief update on the cooperative's internet affiliate. Since last year's annual meeting, Tri-CoGo has added nearly 2,800 subscribers. Mullis reported that the subsidiary is growing at a rate of 2-3 percent per month, which he attributed to the power of word-of-mouth. Mullis also informed viewers that Tri-CoGo surveys its customers to provide higher-quality service. Recent survey results show a Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 90, which indicates that Tri-CoGo holds an even greater standing with its customers than top companies like Chick-fil-A and Amazon, who average in the 60-75 range. "It reflects the trust that our customers put in us and their satisfaction with our services," said Mullis. "It also really reflects the efforts that our employees go to make sure every customer is satisfied."

**YOU CAN WATCH THE MEETING
ON TCEMC'S FACEBOOK PAGE**

BALLOT DRAWING WINNERS ANNOUNCED

To conclude the meeting, Communications Specialist Anna Smith drew names for bill credits to be distributed to eleven lucky winners. Members who cast their vote in the election were automatically entered for a chance to win. Tri-County EMC member Janice Ferencie won the grand prize of a \$500 bill credit. The ten \$50 bill credit winners are listed on the right. (93093001)

\$50 BILL CREDIT WINNERS

Charles Williams
Wanda Clements
Don King
Gennessia Daniel
Gary Roberts

Sandy Bishop
Joseph Thompson
Lenny Ellspermann
Glen Phillips
Marjorie Hanson

WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR ALUMNI THRIVING BETWEEN THE HEDGES

Keep your seats, everyone...the Redcoats are coming! Tri-County EMC Communications Specialist Anna Smith recently had the privilege of catching up with 2024 Washington Youth Tour Alumni Nichole Botsoe of Jones County. Since early September, Nichole has been living out her dream between the hedges as a trombonist for the University of Georgia Redcoat Marching Band. Below is a brief glimpse into her latest adventure.

Since I last saw you, you have moved to Athens, started college, and begun your journey as a Redcoat Marching Band member. How has everything been so far?

So far, it's been really fun being in the band. The trombone section is male-dominated. Out of 33 trombonists, there are only three females. That's been a big adjustment for me. But everyone is super nice. I had never been to a Georgia game before joining the band. Experiencing the Dawg Walk and being so close to all the players was super cool.

Your schedule must be super busy. How do you balance your education, band commitments, and social life as a freshman at the University of Georgia?

It was difficult in the first few weeks because it was so different from anything I experienced in high school. UGA holds you to a high standard. Fortunately, I was in a program before classes started that helped me learn the campus, find out where my classes were going to be, and start practicing an 8-to-5 workday. Also, UGA incorporates an odyssey class into a first-year student's schedule. I am taking a yoga class once a week for an hour. It really helps me decompress.

Being part of such a long-standing tradition at UGA must be exciting. What has been a highlight of your time in the band so far?

The first home game was surreal. We got to do our first pregame. The echo of the crowd when they yelled, "Go Dawgs!" was so exciting. We have also gotten to do exhibitions where we go play for other high school bands. We recently did the Northeast Georgia Marching Exhibition and had the honor of playing with and for Apalachee High School.



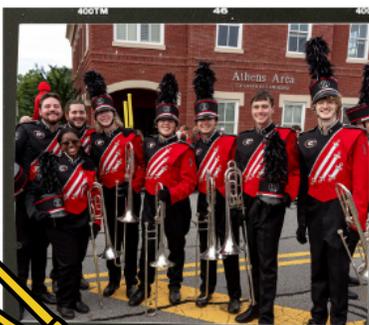
When I spoke to you back in August, you had hoped that your experience as a delegate on the Washington Youth Tour would help you better adjust to college life in terms of meeting new people. Do you feel that is still true?

Yes. I'm kind of introverted, so the Washington Youth Tour helped me break out of my bubble. I enjoy answering questions in class and getting to meet new people. Everyone here is from such different geographic areas, but when we talk, I know there is most likely something we are going to have in common.

Now that you have a few months under your belt, what do you see yourself doing after college?

I'm going to major in Music Education and hopefully work with Pre-K through 5th grade kids that have special needs, and just teach them music while facilitating their learning experience.

“The first home game was surreal. The echo of the crowd when they yelled, “Go Dawgs!” was so exciting.



RECIPE BOX



AUTUMN SWEET POTATO AND APPLE SALAD

Courtesy of Georgia Grown

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 – 3 sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 2 Georgia Fuji apples, cored and diced
- 1/3 cup dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup chopped scallions
- 1/2 cup apple cider
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup pecan oil + extra to cook potatoes
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 cup toasted pecans, coarsely chopped
- Salt and pepper

DIRECTIONS:

If possible, start this the day before eating. Toss diced sweet potatoes with small amount of pecan oil to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Spread on baking sheet and roast in oven at 350° until just tender but still firm. Move potatoes to a bowl and chill overnight.

Place cider in a small saucepan, cook over medium high heat until reduced slightly. Add cranberries and cinnamon and continue cooking for about a minute just to soften cranberries. In a small bowl, whisk together cider, vinegar, and pecan oil. Combine chilled potatoes, apples, scallions, pecans if using, and dressing. Serve cold.



Did you know your recipe is worth \$20 if chosen? Send your best recipes to annas@tri-countyemc.com or mail to P.O. Box 487, Gray, GA 31032.

SPACE HEATERS VS. HEAT PUMPS

How early is too early to turn on your heat? Can your space heater serve as a placeholder until it gets cold outside? Remember that while space heaters work great to supplement inadequate heating in a small space, having them as your primary heat source uses more energy than you think. (466001)



In one hour of operation, a 1,500-watt space heater will use 1.5 kWh of electricity while creating 5,120 BTUs of heat. A 3-ton heat pump will use about 3 kWh of energy to run for an hour

while creating 36,000 BTUs. So, for the energy used to run two space heaters for one hour, you could run a central heat pump large enough to heat a 1,800-square foot home. Why the big difference in operating costs? Space heaters are energy hogs and use resistance elements to create heat. A heat pump uses an electric compressor and fans to move heat from one place to another through the refrigeration cycle.

So, what are the best practices for warming your home this winter? As your trusted energy advisor, Tri-County EMC recommends alternative solutions that do not require as much energy. First, open your blinds and drapes to open your home to direct heat from the sunlight. Add weather-stripping on doors and windows, and caulk the cracks to keep conditioned air inside and outdoor air from leaking into your home. Lastly, you can install recommended levels of insulation to lower heating costs. These tips may seem minor, but when practiced together, they can save energy.

Visit www.tri-countyemc.com/energy-saving-tips.cms for more information.

ACCOUNT NUMBER

Three random account numbers are hidden in this issue of Current Lines. Find your COMPLETE account number inside parentheses for a \$50 bill credit. Call 478.986.8126 to claim your credit.



Tri-County
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

P.O. Box 487
Gray, GA 31032
478.986.8100

www.tri-countyemc.com

Ray Grinberg, CEO

Board of Directors

Brenda P. Green, Chairman
Sammy Hall, Vice-Chairman
Dan Greene, Secretary/Treasurer
George "Buck" Comer, Chap Nelson,
Marion Nelson, Cecil Patterson,
Mike Rainey, Edward Walker

CURRENT LINES

Monthly Publication for
Tri-County EMC Members

Tri-County EMC is an equal opportunity provider and employer