75th Annual Meeting Scheduled for Thursday, October 16

Tri-County EMC’s 75th Annual Meeting will be Thursday, October 16 at 7:00 PM in the community room at the Gray headquarters. Registration will open at 6:00 PM. The annual meeting is your opportunity to hear important information about the state of your cooperative business and to vote in the election of the cooperative’s board of directors.

You do not have to attend the annual meeting in order to vote. If you enroll in online voting before August 30, you will receive your logon information to vote via email on September 20. If you did not enroll to vote online, you will receive a ballot in the mail that can be returned to either office by 5:00 PM on October 17. Your ballot will be delivered to you by the first week of October. You will still have the option to vote online once you receive your printed ballot. Directions will be enclosed in your voting packet.

Annual Meeting Process: Frequently Asked Questions

“I would like to run for director. How do I qualify?”
Directors are Tri-County members. “No person shall be eligible to become a director of the Cooperative who is not a member for a minimum period of two (2) years prior to the election of directors. No person shall be eligible for election thereto whose age, at the time of such election is less than eighteen (18) years of age. No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of, or to hold any other position of trust in, the Cooperative who is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise, or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative.”
(Bylaws, Section 4.02)

“What are the steps taken to elect directors?”
The Nominating Committee nominates director candidates. However, “any one hundred (100) or more members of the Cooperative, acting together over their signatures not less than ninety (90) days prior to the meeting, may make additional nominations . . . .” (Bylaws, Section 4.06) “At each annual meeting of the members, directors shall be elected by secret ballot, including those cast by mail, by the members . . . .” (You can mail your ballot or bring it to the annual meeting.) “. . . provided, that, when the number of nominees per district does not exceed the number of directors to be elected from or for a particular Directorate District, and if there is no objection, balloting may be dispensed within respect of that election. Directors shall be elected by a majority vote of the members present and voting including those votes cast by mail.”
(Bylaws, Section 4.03) (71555001)

“How is the Nominating Committee elected?”
Elected at the annual meeting, the Nominating Committee serves the next year and meets at least 90 days before the annual meeting.
(Bylaws, Section 4.06)
Earlier this year, local high school students Elizabeth Savage and Noah Turner, both of Putnam County, were chosen for the June 12-19 Washington Youth Tour. They joined 107 high school students from Georgia to learn leadership skills, the need for civic involvement and to immerse themselves in the culture and history of the U.S.

According to Kim Bonner, Communications Specialist at Tri-County, the purpose of the Youth Tour is to help EMCs promote stronger communities and a stronger nation by giving as many young people as possible the ability and desire to make meaningful, lifelong contributions. Another key component is to teach students to appreciate diverse points of view and accept different social, racial and cultural backgrounds.

Leadership qualities in the delegates on the trip were strong. “Each delegate on the trip brought something different to the table,” said Turner. “This diversity really helped make the trip even more enjoyable.” Each delegate brought their own leadership qualities, but were also able to learn from others. “The level of inclusiveness that the delegates had was so impressive,” said Savage. “It has inspired me to reach in my community to make sure that peers feel included.”

The Georgia delegation joined approximately 1,600 of their talented and ambitious peers and 300 chaperones from 43 states.

“We think it’s important to emphasize to the next generation, particularly at this critical time in their lives, that standing up for what you believe in is a real test of courage and conviction,” says Bonner.

The event kicked off with a banquet in Atlanta, emceed by Fox 5 Atlanta’s Beth Galvin, the station’s medical team reporter and a WYT alumnus. The group toured the FDR Little White House in Warm Springs before flying to Washington, D.C.

Other highlights included stops at Arlington Cemetery, as well as the Jefferson, Lincoln, FDR, MLK, WWII, Vietnam and Korean War memorials. The group also toured the U.S. Capitol, viewed the Declaration of Independence, and visited the Supreme Court, the Library of Congress and explored the Smithsonian museums.

The students gained perspective on some of today’s important issues and their role as involved citizens during discussions with staff and/ or members of Georgia’s congressional delegation, including personal visits and photos with Senators Saxby Chambliss and Johnny Isakson and U.S. Representatives from across the state.

For nearly 50 years, more than 50,000 young citizens have traveled to Washington with the help of their electric cooperative. High School students within the Tri-County Service Area ages 16-18 qualify to apply. To learn more about the Washington Youth Tour, visit tri-countyemc.com/washington-youth-tour or contact Kim Bonner at kimb@tri-countyemc.com or 478.986.8126.
Electric Membership Cooperatives across the state of Georgia report hundreds of meter tampering cases each year, costing Georgia’s EMCs thousands of dollars to repair damages and collect past charges. To combat meter tampering and electric theft, Tri-County has advanced meters that can detect when a meter has been tampered with, allowing us to respond more quickly. Meters are tested consistently throughout the year. When a meter doesn’t respond during testing, a Tri-County EMC employee will visit the site to inspect the meter. Members caught stealing electricity will immediately have their meter disconnected and be subject to fines from the cooperative that must be paid before service is reconnected at the property, along with any legal charges that may incur.

Under Georgia law, those who steal utility service are subject to a first-degree misdemeanor. Punishment for misdemeanors can be up to 12 months in jail and up to a $1,000 fine. Thieves could also receive a charge of criminal damage to property, which comes with 1 to 10 years of jail time. (40314001)

In addition to legal consequences, safety is also an issue in meter tampering. According to Keith Brooks, Manager of Safety and Training, tampering with a meter can be harmful to Tri-County employees, members and property. “Under normal conditions, meter bases are relatively safe,” said Brooks. “When a meter is tampered with, it can cause multiple hazards ranging from house fires to electrocution.”

Meter tampering costs all of us and it is dangerous. If you witness someone tampering with an electric meter, please contact Tri-County at 1.8566.254.8100.

Follow us on Facebook for energy efficiency tips and tricks

Save paper, vote electronically

To opt out of paper ballots and vote online only during this year’s annual election, visit tri-countyemc.com/voting.da and complete the form or give us a call at 1.866.254.8100. By opting out of paper ballotting and choosing to vote online, you will be sent your logon information for the voting website via email. You will not be mailed a paper ballot.

If you have opted out before, there is no need to opt out again unless your email address has changed. In that case, please complete the online form with your updated email address or give us a call. (41094001)

If we do not hear from you before August 30, you will automatically receive a voting packet in the mail. In the voting packet, you will have the option to return your paper ballot by mail as in years past, or you can vote online using information provided in your ballot package.

If you have questions regarding online voting, please call us at 1.866.254.8100. Remember that Tri-County EMC is owned by its members, so member participation in the annual election is a crucial part of a successful cooperative.

Did you find your account number?

Find your complete account number in this issue of Current Lines and win a $50 bill credit. Call 478.986.8126 to claim your credit.

“Free” Electricity Isn’t Free

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Local student attends youth leadership camp

Hunter Kimball from Gray, GA was chosen to represent Tri-County EMC at the 30th Annual Georgia Cooperative Youth Conference held July 14-18 at the Georgia FFA-FCCLA Center in Covington. The mission of the conference is to educate students about cooperatives, build their leadership skills and promote teamwork through a series of activities, trainings and presentations. During the 5-day conference, students engaged in activities such as the Congressional Insight Workshop, where they participated in making staff, media and legislation decisions to gain a deeper understanding as to why their political involvement in the legislative process is important. Other highlights of the conference included personality assessments and the “Coops 101” program in which speakers discussed the cooperative way of business including history, organization, member benefits, opportunities and current issues. Students that attended heard presentations from council members, Georgia EMC, GEMC Federal Credit Union, Dairy Farmers of America, Staplcotn, Southern States and Farm Credit as well as the Georgia Cotton Commission.

Recipe Box

Caramel Cake

Thanks to Wanda Davis of Haddock, GA for sharing this recipe! Did you know that your recipe is worth $20 if chosen? Send your best recipes to kimb@tri-countyemc.com or mail to P.O. Box 487, Gray, GA 31032.

Ingredients:
1 Box Butter Recipe Cake Mix, plus ingredients listed on box
1 or 2 Cans of Sweetened Condensed Milk (14 oz) (for Caramel)

Directions:
Bake the butter cake mix according to package directions. Place unopened cans of condensed milk in boiling water (a simmer or light boil) and cook for 3 hours. Be sure to keep cans covered in water while boiling, as water will evaporate out. Carefully remove the cans from the water and let them cool. Open cans and spread the condensed milk (caramel) on the cake.

Do you have unclaimed capital credits?

If you were a member in 1984-1986 you may have unclaimed money. To see if you have unclaimed funds, visit tri-countyemc.com/capital-list or call Gloria Sexton at 478.986.8105.