



Tri-County
EMC

CURRENT LINES

NOVEMBER 2020

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CO-OP HOLDS 81ST ANNUAL MEETING

Tri-County EMC's Annual Meeting, like many things in 2020, looked a little different this year. Instead of meeting in our Community Room in our Gray office, the cooperative's 81st annual meeting was held virtually, streamed on Facebook Live and on www.tri-countyemc.com.

Through voting online and by mail, 1,591 cooperative members participated in their cooperative's annual election process. The membership re-elected Post 1 incumbent directors Dan Greene (District 1: Jones, and Bibb Counties), Brenda P. Green (District 2: Putnam, Jasper and Morgan County), and Sammy Hall (District 3: Baldwin, Wilkinson and Twiggs County). In addition to the election of these directors, a special election was held to fill the unexpired term of retiring board member Chester Mercer. Earlier this year, Chap Nelson was chosen to serve in that position until the cooperative election, at which time he would need to be re-elected by the membership at large if he wanted to continue to serve. Nelson chose to continue his service and submitted his name to the Nominating Committee to be included on the ballot. Nelson ran unopposed for Post 2, District 1 (Jones and Bibb Counties) and was re-elected.

The proposed bylaw amendment included on the ballot also passed by a majority vote of 62%. The amendment's passage transfers the role of selecting Nominating Committee members from in-person election at the annual meeting to appointment by the cooperative's board of directors. This change streamlines the process and ensures that business meetings can be held virtually, which is certainly necessary during COVID. The passing of the amendment does not change the qualifications for and duties of the Nominating Committee members under Tri-County EMC bylaws. The process for members to run for board seats also remains unchanged.

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ANNUAL MEETING, CONTINUED



Brenda P. Green, Chairman, gives an address at Tri-County's 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting in October.

During her address, Brenda P. Green, Chairman of the Tri-County EMC Board of Directors, informed viewers that the cooperative is in strong financial shape, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. "This is due in part to the strength and resilience of our membership," said Green. "You found creative and innovative ways to keep your businesses going and employees working. We are proud to be part of this community."

Green also reported that in December 2019, Tri-County EMC retired \$2.7 million in capital credits to individuals that were members from 1993-1997. Like stock dividends in a for-profit company, capital credits represent your share of ownership in the electric cooperative. If your bill is one percent of the cooperative's total revenue, your portion of capital credits would be one percent of the co-op's margins. Tri-County hopes to refund a comparable amount in 2020.

Ray Grinberg, CEO, acknowledged that 2020 was a little different from the year that had been planned. "Even though this year didn't go quite as we expected, we worked towards three fundamental objectives," said Grinberg. "Keeping our employees, members and the public safe, keeping the lights on, and giving our members access to tools to manage their accounts and energy usage. Even in times of hardship, these were goals that we strived towards this year."

During the height of COVID, measures were taken to keep our employees safe and socially distanced – especially for linemen – so the cooperative could keep the lights on. As the financial impact of COVID-19 became apparent, Tri-County took measures to assist members, as well. "As we were beginning to see the financial effects of COVID, we temporarily suspended disconnections for nonpayment until June. In addition, several payment options were made available for members financially affected by COVID. And options are still available for those that continue to be affected," said Grinberg.

To keep members safe, lobbies continue to remain closed. "We feel it is important to do our part in continuing to social distance where we can," said Grinberg. "Although our lobbies are closed, our drive-thru windows are open. In addition, we have added two payment kiosks in the drive-thrus of our offices, and added the ability to pay your bill at Dollar General, CVS and other retailers through the CheckOut program."

In early spring, Tri-County EMC stepped up its right-of-way maintenance efforts by introducing a new right-of-way contractor, Georgia Right of Way to keep Tri-County's nearly three-thousand miles of power lines clear. "15% of the cooperative's controllable costs are spent on maintaining our right-of-way. It's one of the most important investments we can make to increase reliability," said Grinberg.

In 2021, the first of the two new units at plant Vogtle will be added to Tri-County's fuel mix. "This will add a significant amount of clean, carbon-free power that will serve Georgia for decades to come," said Grinberg. Although Tri-County has not had a rate increase since 2014, an

adjustment will need to be made to add the cost of these new resources into the rates.

And finally, a major initiative for 2020 has been and continues to be connectivity, both for the cooperative's internal needs and for the community. COVID-19 has compounded poor internet access for those needing to study or work from home. In 2019, Governor Kemp signed Senate Bill 2 giving the EMC's statutory authority to provide internet service. Earlier this year, Tri-County commissioned a feasibility study that looked at providing fiber-to-the-home retail broadband service. The cooperative's staff and board of directors are actively working to assess the existing internet service available to Tri-County members and options for potentially entering this business. In September, Tri-County's membership was surveyed, asking for opinions about your internet service and whether you would consider switching. "We appreciate the outpouring of input. We anticipate making a final decision about our role in helping our community get high speed internet by the end of the year," said Grinberg. (9157001)



A behind the scenes look as Ray Grinberg, CEO, delivers his address at Tri-County EMC's 2020 Virtual Annual Meeting.

WATCH THE ANNUAL MEETING

If you didn't get a chance to watch the Annual Meeting live, the recording is available at tri-countyemc.com/election.cms.

ANNUAL MEETING BALLOT DRAWING WINNERS

Tri-County EMC distributed \$50 bill credits to 10 lucky members who voted in the cooperative's 2020 Election. **Larry Davis** of Baldwin County won the \$500 grand prize. Thanks to all members that participated in the election this year. Be sure to vote in the election next year to have a chance to win.

\$50 BILL CREDIT WINNERS:

Shannon King, Putnam Co.

Chris Fesmire, Jones Co.

Amos Ryce, Jones Co.

Steve Sexton, Jones Co.

Oswaldo Castro-Poveda, Putnam Co.

Jewel Deveraux, Putnam Co.

Lawton Wright, Baldwin Co.

Joann Hill, Putnam Co.

Leonard McBee, Putnam Co.

Jack Finley, Putnam Co.

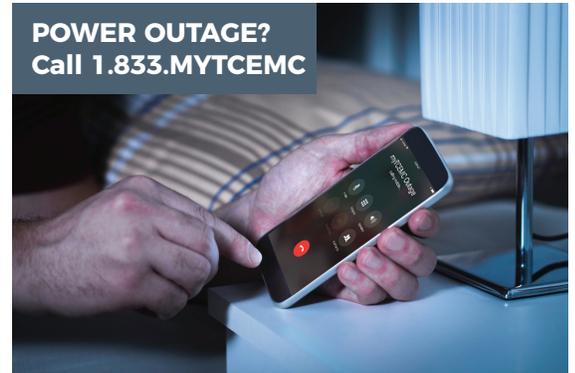
CALL 1.833.MYTCEMC TO REPORT AN OUTAGE

If you prefer to call in your outage, jump to the head of the line by calling 1.833.MYTCEMC during an outage. In addition to reporting outages by myTCEMC app, website, text and our phone number, we have a phone number dedicated to outage reporting.

By dialing 1.833.MYTCEMC rather than our local number, your call will bypass call menus and go directly to the outage reporting system. There, you can report your outage using the automated system or by talking to a live representative. (20068001)

We encourage you to save this number in your phone for future use.

POWER OUTAGE?
Call 1.833.MYTCEMC



SPACE HEATERS VS. HEAT PUMP: WHICH IS MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT?

The fall chill is in the air. You think to yourself, "How long can I go without turning on my heat?" Or, "Maybe I should just use my space heater until it really gets cold." But is the space heater really the most efficient way to heat your home? While space heaters are a good way to temper a cold bathroom in the mornings, using them as your main source of heating doesn't save as much as you would think.

In one hour of operation, a 1,500 watt space heater will use 1.5 kWhs of electricity while creating 5,120 BTUs of heat. In comparison, a 3-ton heat pump will use about 3 kWhs of energy to run for an hour while creating 36,000 BTUs. So, for the amount of energy used to run two space heaters for one hour, you could run a central heat pump large enough to heat an 1,800 sq. ft. home.

Why the big difference in operating costs? Space heaters use resistance elements, similar to that in a toaster oven, to create heat. A heat pump uses an electric compressor and fans to move heat from one place to another through the refrigeration cycle.



**HAPPY
THANKSGIVING!**

Tri-County EMC offices will be closed on November 26-27 for Thanksgiving. We hope you have a Happy Thanksgiving!

RECIPE BOX

ASIAN NOODLE SALAD

SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 2 Pkgs of Chicken Flavor Ramen Noodles-Reserve Seasoning Pkts.
- 4 Cups Shredded Cabbage
- 1/2 Cup Shredded Carrots
- 3 Stalks of Diced Celery
- 1 Medium Diced Sweet Onion
- 2 Cans diced Water Chestnuts, rinsed and drained
- 1/4 Cup diced Sweet Red Peppers

DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 2 Packets of Ramen Noodle Seasoning
- 1 Cup Olive Oil
- 1/4 Cup Soy Sauce
- 1/4 Cup Apple Cider Vinegar or Rice Wine Vinegar
- 1/2 Cup Sugar

DIRECTIONS

Place 2 packs of noodles in the collander. Pour 1 quart of boiling water over noodles. Toss to wet the noodles. Set aside to drain. In a large bowl, toss together shredded cabbage, shredded carrots, diced celery and onion, diced sweet red peppers and rinsed and drained water chestnuts. Add the cooled noodles and toss well together.

Whisk together dressing Ingredients. Pour over noodles and cabbage mixture and toss well. Add sesame seeds and toss. Refrigerate 2+ hours. Serve with diced green onions on top.

This salad also keeps well for the next day.

This recipe is courtesy of Susan Clark of Jones County. Did you know 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.

OPERATION ROUNDUP GRANT APPLICATIONS DUE DECEMBER 1

ABOUT OPERATION ROUNDUP:

Operation Roundup is funded by voluntary contributions from Tri-County members to the Tri-County EMC Foundation. Participants in the program have their monthly bill rounded up to the next dollar, with that surplus amount going to fund Operation Roundup. Charitable institutions, government institutions, civic organizations or other not-for-profit organizations located within Tri-County's eight county service area are eligible to receive funding. Applications must be for special needs or projects. Grants are awarded quarterly.



INTERESTED IN APPLYING FOR A GRANT?

Do you know of a charitable group needing funding for a specific project in the Tri-County EMC service area? Encourage them to complete an Operation Roundup Grant Application. The next deadline to apply for an Operation Roundup Grant is December 1. Applications can be found on our website at www.tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms or mailed upon request by calling 478.986.8126. (81254001)

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Applications must be for a special project or need. Donations will not be made to an organization's general budget.
- Project must be located within a county that Tri-County EMC serves (Baldwin, Putnam, Jones, Bibb, Jasper, Morgan Twiggs or Wilkinson County)
- Charitable institutions, government institutions, civic organizations or other not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply.

ACCOUNTNUMBER

Did you find your Tri-County EMC account number? Three random account numbers are hidden in each issue of Current Lines. Find your complete account number inside parentheses in this issue of Current Lines for a \$50 bill credit. Call us at 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
Thomas Noles, Secretary/Treasurer
George "Buck" Comer, Dan Greene,
Chap Nelson, Marion Nelson,
Cecil Patterson, Mike Rainey

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Monthly Publication for
Tri-County EMC Members