

current lines

A monthly publication for Tri-County EMC members

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Healing and Hope Through Horseback Riding.....

Shannon Thompson has been an equestrian most of her life but never fully realized the healing powers of horses until she started Brave Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center.

"The inspiration for the riding center came from my Uncle Marc," said Thompson. "He has Down Syndrome and has always been the center of our family."

Founded in 2004, Brave Meadows allows riders to develop an emotional connection to the horse, improve motor skills, strengthen control of extremities, improve posture and help to develop core strength.

Bobby Hill, age 15, is a great example. Bobby was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus and was one of Shannon's first riders when he began riding at age six. "When he first started riding he never really talked much," said Kathryn Hill, Bobby's mother. "Within the first few times of riding, he started talking to the horses like they were people – a huge accomplishment for him."

Two years ago, Bobby suffered a brain injury that left him paralyzed. He had to learn to move all his muscles again – even relearning how to blink his eyes. "That was just 2 years ago, and this October he won 2nd place in the Special Olympics. The Special Olympics really gave him something to work towards

and helped to retrain his muscles."

Bobby was one of three riders who recently travelled to Gainesville, GA in October to compete in the Special Olympics. Partially funded by an Operation Roundup Grant from Tri-County EMC, the three riders competed in different classes, some involving patterns on horseback, some involving the rider leading the horse around the ring on foot.

Riad Akhras attended the Special Olympics and competed in 2 events. He's been riding at Brave Meadows for 5 years and looks forward to riding every Saturday. "I like the horses," said Riad. "I felt nervous when I first started, but then I learned to trust the horses." Josette, Riad's mom, has been pleasantly surprised with the benefits of horseback riding. "It's definitely helped with his confidence," said Josette. "It's a good opportunity for him to get out and do the best he can." Riad also organizes the barbecue held each year at Brave Meadows and helps with other community events the organization puts on for the community. "It makes him feel like he is contributing and is a part of something."

Taylor Gryczan has been riding since February and won first place in Western Horsemanship at the Special Olympics. Taylor's mom, Erin, was looking for an outside activity to help with Taylor's autism. They tried T-ball and bowling, but nothing was as enjoyable to him as riding. "He looks forward to it each week," said Erin. "He always says 'I'm ready to ride!'"

Aside from Brave Meadows, Shannon is also a full-time teacher. When the students are riding, she makes an effort to incorporate lessons from school into their riding time. Whether it be numbers or vocabulary, there is usually a simple way to reiterate the les-

Shannon Thompson, founder of Brave Meadows, poses with Sunny after teaching a few lessons.



Taylor Gryczan, Riad Akhras and Bobby Hill show off their medals at the Special Olympics in October.

sons from the classroom into the ride.

Riders have a wide array of diagnoses, but all benefit from the riding. And it's a networking opportunity for the parents, too. "Everyone has different diagnoses, but we all worry about the same things. It's nice to talk to other people that understand what you are going through," said Kathryn.

Brave Meadows is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Most of the horses are donated to the center, but they rely on contributions from the community to keep the horses in good health and keep the center going. To learn more, to make a donation or to volunteer, call 478.319.0203 or email bravemeadows@msn.com.



Christmas Card Art Contest

Students in grades Kindergarten through 5th living in the Tri-County EMC service area were invited to participate in the Tri-County EMC Christmas Card Art Contest. A record total of 230 entries was submitted. The top three submissions are shown below. The first place artwork will be featured on the Tri-County EMC Christmas Card.



Cooper Snook, 1st Place



Emily Harrison, 2nd Place



Mariah Burney, 3rd Place

Winners were also chosen for each grade level. All winning artwork can be seen on our website at www.tri-countyemc.com/christmascardartcontest.cms. Winning artists will be awarded in their classrooms. All artwork submitted will be donated to local nursing homes during the Christmas season. (83281001)

LIHEAP: Georgia's Heating Assistance Program

The Georgia Department of Human Services provides assistance on heating bills through the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to low-income families, the elderly and other applicants who qualify. When applying for assistance, be sure to have your proof of income from the last 30 days available, as well as proof of Social Security numbers for each household member, your last month's heating

bill and proof of citizenship or legal immigration status. (48619001)

For local heating assistance, contact the community action agency that coincides with the county in which you reside listed to the right. For more information about the LIHEAP program, call 1-800-869-1150 or visit www.liheap.org. You can also contact your local organizations, listed to the right, for further assistance.

For heating assistance call...

Bibb County
Macon-Bibb County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc.
478-738-3240

Jones & Twiggs Counties
Middle Georgia Community Action Agency, Inc.
478-922-4464

Baldwin, Jasper, Morgan, Putnam & Wilkinson Counties
Overview, Inc.
478-453-4111

Operation Roundup Scholarship Winners

In addition to awarding grants each quarter, the Tri-County EMC Foundation also awards scholarships to two deserving students in the service area twice per year. The scholarships, judged anonymously, are worth \$1,000 and are awarded based on academics, financial need and service to others. Special consideration is given to non-traditional students who are working full or part-time and have returned to school. Learn more about Operation Roundup and other scholarship opportunities at <https://www.tri-countyemc.com/scholarships-overview.cms>. Congratulations to our recipients! (85787001)



La'Darius Thomas of Baldwin County currently attends Mercer University. La'Darius is obtaining a Bachelors and Masters of Science in Engineering simultaneously through the Integrated Masters of Science Program. He also established a chapter for the National Society of Black Engineers at Mercer University. La'Darius volunteers through the "Be A Good NeighBear" event to teach students about STEM education, and he also serves as an usher in his church.



Selena Bautista of Putnam County currently attends Georgia Military College. Selena is working towards a degree in early childhood education. She plans to obtain a graduate degree in ESOL to help elementary school students that speak English as a secondary language learn to speak English fluently. Selena is also a paraprofessional at Jasper County Preschool.

Outage Texting Coming Soon

Is Your Power Out? Text Us!

Texting is coming! Sign up for Tri-County EMC's TextTCEMC service, and enjoy the convenience of texting outages, receiving important updates and more. This free service allows members to report outages via text, and that information goes directly into our outage management system so that crews can quickly be dispatched to restore power.

In late December, you will be getting a text from Tri-County EMC from phone number 85700. Follow the instructions on that text message if you would like to continue to receive alerts from Tri-County EMC. You always have the ability to unsubscribe by texting STOP to 85700.

If you do not receive a text, simply contact our Customer Service Department at 1.866.254.8100 or 478.986.8100 to update your phone number in our system. You can also update your information using our online member portal. Then, you'll be able to text "TEXTTCEMC" to 85700 to get started. (85931001)



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 bill credit.

Bring One For The Chipper

Bring your Christmas trees and natural wreaths to the Overland Way Convenience Center on Saturday, January 7. Tri-County EMC's right-of-way contractor, Aplundh, will be chipping trees from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Mulch chipped from the trees will be available for you to take home.

Overland Way Convenience Center
153 Overland Way | Gray, Georgia
Saturday, January 7 | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm



Merry Christmas

AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

**Holiday
Office
Closures:**

Dec. 23-26
Jan. 2



Recipe Box

Ambrosia Cake

Thanks to Judy Lawrence of Baldwin County for submitting 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.**

Cake Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup finely shredded, unsweetened coconut
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup coconut milk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 cup fresh orange juice (4 to 5 oranges)
- 1 tablespoon finely grated orange rind

Orange Glaze Ingredients:

- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup fresh orange juice from 1 orange

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour a bundt pan. Combine the flour, sugar, coconut, baking powder, baking soda and salt. In a separate bowl, combine coconut milk, oil, eggs, vanilla, orange juice and rind. Pour into dry ingredients and mix until smooth. Pour the mixture into the prepared bundt pan. Bake 35 to 40 minutes, until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Let cake cool completely before removing from pan. To prepare glaze, whisk together powdered sugar and orange juice. If there are little lumps, let glaze sit 30 minutes until they dissolve. Pour glaze over cake.



Tri-County
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

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