

# current lines

A monthly publication for Tri-County EMC members

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## Co-op Holds 78th Annual Meeting

**M**embers of Tri-County EMC, employees and local and state dignitaries gathered on October 19 for the 78th annual meeting of Tri-County EMC at the headquarters in Gray, GA. Billy Jerles, the cooperative's General Counsel, announced election results for the board of directors. The re-elected board members for Post 1 are Dan Greene (District 1), Brenda P. Green (District 2) and Sammy Hall (District 3). These members will serve three-year terms. 1,701 members participated in this year's election process via mail, online voting or casting a ballot in person.

The cooperative's board chairman, Brenda P. Green, reported that Tri-County EMC is in excellent financial condition according to a recent audit. In addition, Tri-County EMC's rates remain competitive when compared

to our EMC peers and Georgia Power. According to the summer 2017 Public Service Commission Rate Survey, Tri-County EMC has the 10th lowest rates of Georgia's EMCs at the 2,000 kWh level. The cooperative ranks 11th lowest at 1,500 kWhs and 12th lowest at 1,000 kWhs.

The cooperative is constantly looking for ways to better serve members. "In order for us to continue to improve, we survey our members each quarter to get feedback and determine which areas to focus on," said Green. Survey respondents rated Tri-County at a 9.02 out of 10 in overall satisfaction. This compares to an 8.89 rating for the average cooperative. "These surveys will be ongoing and used in strategic planning each year."

In addition to requesting feedback from members, Tri-County is also researching new technologies to improve service. This year, the cooperative completed a

Technology Plan Review. "We assessed the informational and operational technology that we utilize," said Green. "We are well-positioned in regard to technology platforms, putting us ahead of our average peer utilities."

A combination of unclaimed capital credits and Operation Roundup funds help the cooperative invest in the community. In the past year, Tri-County awarded \$30,000 to teachers through Bright Ideas Grants and \$10,000 in scholarships to students. Harris Lancaster, immediate past chair of the Tri-County EMC Foundation Board, spoke about the impact Operation Roundup makes on the community. "When members round their bill to the next dollar, that small amount makes a tremendous difference in our community," said Lancaster. Since 2001, members have contributed \$1.23 million dollars to Operation Roundup.

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Ray Grinberg, CEO, speaks to Annual Meeting attendees about 2018 goals for Tri-County EMC.

## Directors Elected for Post 1

**Dan Greene**  
District 1, Post 1



**Brenda P. Green**  
District 2, Post 1



**Sammy Hall**  
District 3, Post 1



## Nominating Committee Elected

During the 78th Annual Meeting, eight members were elected to serve on the Tri-County EMC Nominating Committee. The purpose of the committee is to nominate candidates for the 2018 board of directors elections. For 2018, the committee will nominate the director candidates to fill Post 2 of Districts 1, 2 and 3.

### District 1:

**Thomas Comer**

**Tracy Gattie**

**Norma Hancock**

### District 2:

**Raleigh Hicks**

**Ken Farr**

### District 3:

**Jack Brock**

**Bruce Dempster**

**Charles McCuen, Jr.**

## Ballot Drawing Winners

Tri-County EMC distributed \$50 bill credits to 10 lucky members at the 2017 Annual Meeting. **Cynthia Tucker** of Putnam County won the \$500 grand prize. The prizes were drawn from members who voted in the board of directors' election. Congratulations winners! Tri-County thanks all members that participated in the election this year. Be sure to vote in the election next year to have a chance to win.

**Raymond Dumas**, Jones County

**Sherrie Woodard**, Putnam County

**Jerome Collins**, Jones County

**Roger Walker**, Wilkinson County

**Aretta Louise Yarbrough**, Putnam County

**Wayne Thames**, Putnam County

**Amey Montgomery**, Putnam County

**Kathleen Trifon**, Putnam County

**David E. Turner**, Jones County

**Mary McDonald**, Putnam County

## Annual Meeting Continued from Page 1

"Through this program, wheelchair ramps have been constructed, food has been purchased for those in need and medical needs have been met. Thank you for making this possible. It's the money that you give that gives us this opportunity to serve the community."

Green also addressed the most recent storm to affect Tri-County. "Tropical Storm Irma was the most damaging and costly storm in the history of Tri-County EMC," said Green. "Despite considerable widespread damage and challenging circumstances, our employees worked day and night until power was restored to every member. And the outpouring of community support shown to our cooperative through donations of food, flowers and kind messages exemplified the cooperative spirit."

"The number we are most proud of from Irma is zero," Ray Grinberg, CEO, added. "We had zero lost time accidents during the 4,600 hours worked that week." Tri-County EMC's estimated cost of Irma was about \$1.5 million. Because a State of Emergency was declared, the cooperative is eligible for reimbursement for storm expenses through FEMA and other entities.

Grinberg emphasized the cooperative's promise to its members – to be a financially stable company, to deliver reliable power and provide high quality member service. "My job is to help manage the controllable expenses," said Grinberg. "The first thing our team thinks about is how we can manage our member's energy dollar most wisely and do the best for our company. We're very conservative in the dollars per consumer we spend." While the cost of power, interest and depreciation have steadily increased, the operating costs of the co-op – the controllable costs – and margins have remained relatively

flat. An increase in the charge per kWh, which hasn't happened since 2009, is expected in 2018.

A diverse fuel mix is important to deliver reliable power. At the end of August, the co-owners of Plant Vogtle jointly decided and recommended the completion of the construction of Units 3 and 4, which will come on line in 2021 and 2022, respectively. "Right now, all power companies are benefitting from the low cost of natural gas," said Grinberg. "But, as prices change in the future, diversity in our fuel mix is important." Costs of Vogtle will be reflected in rates as they come online. These units will produce nuclear power for the next 60-80 years.

Tri-County is also making advances with reliability. "You want your power on all the time. We want to make sure your power is on all the time," said Grinberg. "We're working hard on right-of-way maintenance and overall system improvements." Tri-County is looking at ways to backfeed lines so that, in the case of an outage, power can be rerouted to serve members. The cooperative is also working on system automation to reduce outage times.

In addition to improvements on the power lines, Tri-County is constantly evaluating emerging technology to make it easier for our members to do business with us. "We're here to provide quality service to you. We want you to be able to do business with us the way you want to do business with us." While Tri-County's office will always be available to serve members, the cooperative is also working to give options to members to do an increasing amount of cooperative business online. (51065001)

**Did you find your account number?**

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

# Foundation Grants \$22,960 in September.....

During the September meeting, the Tri-County EMC Foundation Board approved 12 grant projects, totaling \$22,960 in Operation Roundup funds, to benefit organizations or individuals in local communities. Below are organizations that received funds this quarter.

**Action Ministries:** \$2,000 to help transition homeless individuals in Baldwin and Putnam counties into safe, stable housing.

**Boys and Girls Club of Baldwin and Jones Counties:** \$5,000 in funds to incorporate STEAM lessons and Leadership Development programs into the clubs.

**Brave Meadows Therapeutic Riding Center:** \$1,000 to send riders to compete in the Special Olympics.

**Chard Wray Memorial Food Pantry:** \$1,000 to purchase food for a food pantry to serve those in need in Baldwin County.

**Eston Altman Scout Center:** \$3,974 to be used to replace a failed air conditioner in the building used by scouts and several community groups.

**Greater Faith Revelational Outreach Ministries:** \$1,000 to purchase food for individuals in need in Baldwin and Jones Counties.

**Hardwick Baptist Church:** \$1,000 to purchase food for a food pantry to serve those in need in Baldwin County.

**Jones County Arts:** \$2,400 to purchase microphones to be used in the community youth theater program.

**Lake Oconee FCA:** \$1,000 in funds to send students to Team United Training and provide resources for an evangelical outreach event.

**Marshall Memorial Baptist Church:** \$2,500 to purchase materials to replace the roof of the home of an individual in need in Putnam County.

**Northridge Christian Ramp Ministry:** \$486 to purchase materials to construct a wheelchair ramp for an individual with dementia in Baldwin County.

**Putnam Christian Outreach:** \$1,000 to purchase food for a food bank to serve individuals in need in Putnam County.



## Interested in Applying for a Grant?:

Do you know of a non-profit 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 is December 1. For an application and checklist of qualifications, visit [tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms](http://tri-countyemc.com/operation-round-up.cms) (83747001)

**Vanessa Jackson (right) accepts an Operation Roundup Grant on behalf of Putnam Christian Outreach. The funds will be used to purchase food for the organization's food bank**

## Bright Ideas Grant Applications Due Dec. 7

The Bright Ideas Grant Program, sponsored by Tri-County EMC, provides grants for teachers to improve education in local classrooms through innovative projects in grades Pre-K through 12 that would not otherwise be funded. Georgia certified public or private school teachers in grades Pre-K through 12 in Baldwin, Jones, Putnam, Jasper, Twiggs and Wilkinson counties qualify.

Since 2008, Tri-County EMC has provided more than \$180,000 to teachers within the service area to execute innovative projects that would otherwise go unfunded. Funds for the Bright Ideas Grants come from unclaimed capital credits that otherwise would have been surrendered to the state.

The grants are open to all subjects. Projects will be judged based on innovation, goals, learning objectives, student involvement and budget. Individual projects can be funded up to \$1,500. All applications must be completed online at [tri-countyemc.com/bright-ideas.cms](http://tri-countyemc.com/bright-ideas.cms). Applications must be submitted by midnight on December 7 to be considered for funding. For questions about the program or application process, please contact Kim Broun at 478.986.8126 or [kimb@tri-countyemc.com](mailto:kimb@tri-countyemc.com).



# Teachers: Win Money For Your Classroom!

# Enroll in E-Billing.....

Save Paper, Pay Online



An alternative to standard paper billing, eBilling allows you to receive your monthly statement via email and pay online. Once enrolled, you will receive a monthly email that will take you directly to your current month's bill. (42054001)

For more information visit [www.tri-countyemc.com/ebilling.cms](http://www.tri-countyemc.com/ebilling.cms) or contact a customer service representative at 1.866.254.8100.

## Did you know?

You could save up to 10% of water heating costs by wrapping the water tank with jacket insulation. This is especially valuable for older water heaters with less internal insulation.

# Happy Thanksgiving!

Tri-County EMC offices will be closed on November 23-24 for Thanksgiving.

## Recipe Box

### Glazed Pumpkin Cookies

Thanks to Jimmie Sears of Jones County for sharing this delicious recipe! **Did you know that your recipe is worth \$20 if chosen? Send your best recipes to [kimb@tri-countyemc.com](mailto:kimb@tri-countyemc.com) or mail to P.O. Box 487, Gray, GA 31032.**

#### Cookie Ingredients:

- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 cup light brown sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 cup pumpkin puree
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsps. pumpkin pie spice
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 cup chopped nuts

#### Glaze Ingredients:

- 3 tbsps. butter
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 tsp. maple flavoring
- 1/2 cup dark brown sugar
- 1/2 to 2 cups of powdered sugar

#### Cookie Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Blend in pumpkin, egg and vanilla. Blend in flour, baking powder and soda, pumpkin spice, nuts and salt. Drop tablespoons of dough 3 inches apart on ungreased baking sheet. Bake 10-12 minutes or until golden brown around the edges. Let the cookies cool for 10 minutes then spread on glaze.

#### Glaze Directions:

Heat butter and brown sugar in a medium saucepan until bubbly. Cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute or until slightly thickened. Beat in milk. Remove from heat and add maple flavoring. Add powdered sugar until the glaze is a smooth consistency.



Tri-County  
EMC

Owned By Those We Serve

P.O. Box 487  
Gray, GA 31032  
478.986.8100  
FAX 478.986.4733  
[www.tri-countyemc.com](http://www.tri-countyemc.com)

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Monthly Publication for  
Tri-County EMC Members  
Kim Broun, Editor  
Communications Specialist