

TN Broadband Study Identifies Cooperatives as Part of the Solution

In July of this year, The Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development released the results of a comprehensive study on broadband access in Tennessee. I am encouraged by the report's findings and recommendations.

The study, which examined broadband use and availability, found that regulatory barriers in Tennessee restrict investment and reduce competition. The report specifically mentions a state law that prevents electric cooperatives from providing retail broadband.

The study identified rural and economically distressed regions of the state as areas of greatest need. They are the same communities in which many of our members live. Despite this unique position of serving the communities identified as in greatest need, Tennessee State Law (Tenn. Code Ann § 65-235-205) prevents co-ops from providing broadband access to our members. Basically, our hands are tied by this law.

Even so, I am optimistic that the legislature will act on the recommendations of this study. My hope is that they will work together creating an environment that encourages investment, competition and, ultimately, greater access to broadband for our member-customers.

The full report is online at www.tn.gov/assets/entities/ecd/attachments/broadband-study.pdf.



Rody Blevins
President/CEO
Volunteer Energy
Cooperative

(continued from page 5)

perfect 10 eScores within all of TVA's service area. In April a VEC member received the first perfect 10 in our EnergyRight Solutions eScore program.

VEC members Keith and Debbie Kleintop of the Crossville service area are the happy homeowners with the eScore of 10. Mr. Kleintop, a retired engineer, did a complete remodel of the home he and Debbie purchased for retirement. During the remodel he replaced 22 windows and chose a TVA Qualified Contractor to install the windows. The contractor recommended Mr. Kleintop contact VEC about potential rebates for his high efficiency windows.

VEC connected the Kleintops with eScore inspector/evaluator Marcus Standifer. Marcus inspected their home. In addition to the Energy Star windows, they had replaced their HVAC and installed a new duct system. They completely encapsulated their attic with foam, and used cellulose for insulation in the walls. They purchased ENERGY STAR appliances and had installed ENERGY STAR doors as well as the windows. VEC processed the eligible rebates for each area in which they qualified. Due to the quality of the Kleintop's renovation choices, their home scored a perfect 10 in energy efficiency. In July Marcus presented the Kleintops with a medal from the eScore program representing their accomplishment.

When asked about the process, Kleintop stated that, "It just made sense to have the most efficient home during retirement. Receiving a free inspection, advice on energy efficiency and rebates was helpful. The eScore process was easy and Marcus was helpful."

If you would like to know more about the eScore program go to www.vec.org and click on the green house with a white 10 or you can go to www.2escore.com.



Keith and Debbie Kleintop with their Perfect 10.

October is Cooperative Month

Virtually every American's life is touched in some way by cooperatives. About 47,000 separate cooperatives, with more than 100 million members, currently operate in the United States. Cooperatives exist to meet the needs of members as economically as possible – not to make a profit.

What sets cooperatives apart from other types of businesses is that they are owned and controlled by the people who use their products and services, so members have a chance to share in their successes and have a voice in their operation. Cooperatives are led by their membership through an elected board of directors.

In addition to providing high-quality electric service, electric cooperatives are deeply committed to their communities. They empower members to improve the quality of their lives through economic development and revitalization projects, job creation, youth leadership training and educational services.

If you received this copy of *Powerlines* with your VEC electric bill, then you are a member-owner of at least one cooperative – Volunteer Energy Cooperative.

What is an Electric Cooperative?

- Private, independent, non-profit electric utility
- Owned by the customers they serve
- Incorporated under the laws of the states in which they operate
- Established to provide at-cost electric service
- Governed by a board of directors elected from the membership which sets policies and procedures that are implemented by the co-op's management

Cooperative Facts at a Glance

- Nationwide, rural electric cooperatives serve an estimated 42 million people in 47 states. There are 22 electric cooperatives in Tennessee.
- Over 19 million businesses, homes, schools, churches, farms, irrigation systems and other establishments in 2,500 of 3,141 counties in the U.S. are members of rural electric cooperatives.
- Rural electric cooperatives provide power to more than 13 percent of the nation's electric meters.



Keith Kleintop (right) receiving his Perfect 10 medal from Marcus Standifer (left).

Energy Efficiency Perfection

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) has partnered with TVA to offer the EnergyRight® Solutions eScore™ program to our members since December of 2014. The program provides free inspections, evaluations, and home energy efficiency scoring. The scoring takes into consideration insulation, heating and cooling systems, ductwork and other factors that increase or decrease the energy efficiency of a home. Since the start of the program, there have only been seven

(continued on page 6)



The VECustomers Share program funded \$30,300 in community service grants in August. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$5.7 million in grants has been awarded. The deadline for grant applications is the last working day of each month. For additional information, contact the office of Marketing and Economic Development, at 423-334-7051. Applications are also available online, at www.vec.org.



VECustomer Shares Board Member Jim Taylor presents a check to Rodney Cravens, Captain of the West Fentress Station Fire Department.

Organizations receiving grants in August

Hull-York Disabled American Veterans Chapter 5	\$2,750	Athens Lions Charities	\$500
Monterey First Baptist Church		Gamble Road Wild Game Dinner	\$500
Community Fall Festival	\$1,450	Good Night Sleep Tight Pajama & Book Drive	\$500
Cumberland Adult Reading Council	\$1,375	Kids Force	\$500
Junior Beta Club	\$1,375	Learning Freedom Project	\$500
Pleasant Hill Elementary Parent Teacher Organization	\$1,375	Meigs County Historical Society	\$500
Mended Hearts Chapter 127	\$1,300	Midway High School Band Boosters	\$500
YAI Baseball Boosters Club Inc	\$1,250	Miracle Lake	\$500
American Cancer Society - Rhea & Bledsoe	\$1,000	Ooltewah High School Band Boosters	\$500
Bradley County Juvenile Recovery Court	\$1,000	Quilts of Valor Foundation	\$500
Luminary School Backpack Committee	\$1,200	West Polk Empty Stocking	\$500
Meigs County-Decatur Chamber of Commerce	\$1,000	People Helping People	\$450
Maple Grove Community Senior Adults	\$1,000	Midway Middle School Football Booster Club	\$350
Fairfield Glade Volunteer Fire Department	\$750	Midway Quarterback Club	\$350
Fentress County Senior Citizen's Center	\$750	Lady Waves Soccer Club	\$300
Meigs High Golf Boosters	\$750	Bradley Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center	\$250
Meigs High School Cheer Booster Club	\$750	CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of Bradley & Polk Counties	\$250
Ocoee Regions Builders Association	\$750	Cleveland/Bradley Chamber of Commerce Foundation	\$250
Ooltewah Harrison Education Foundation (D9)	\$750	Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region	\$250
Polk County Health Council	\$700	Midway Youth Cheerleading Organization	\$250
Polk County Retired Teachers Association	\$700	American Cancer Society - Polk	\$200
American Cancer Society - Meigs	\$500	Christian Counseling Center	
American Cancer Society - McMinn	\$500	of Cumberland County	\$125

2016 4-H Electric Camp
"Electrifying Minds for 25 Years"

Volunteer Energy Cooperative provided camp scholarships for a group of rising seventh- and eighth-grade students to attend the 2016 4-H Electric Camp. These campers joined hundreds of other students from across the state in discovering the world of electricity by participating in various camp learning centers that provided "hands-on" activities where 4-H'ers were able to "learn by doing."

VEC employee Kristy Kelly-Sewell served as a volunteer for the camp, which was held June 28 – July 1 on the University of Tennessee Knoxville campus. Kristy also serves as a member of the committee that plans and executes the 4-H Electric Camp each year. Highlights of the camp included:

Electric Meter Lamps – In this learning center, students transform an electric meter into a lamp that not only gives light but also measures how much electricity the lamp uses when it is turned on.

Home Energy Conservation – In this activity, students learn how conserving electricity in their home not only helps to lower the electric bill but also helps to conserve our environment.

Electric Motors – Students learned in this activity the different parts of an electric motor and how electromagnetism makes a motor turn. Students also put to use what they learned as they built their own electric motor.



Students work with instructors to make a lamp with a working revenue meter.

(continued on page 4)



4-H Electric Camp attendees from the VEC service area.

Electric Vehicles – Campers learned about batteries, DC current and how DC current is used to propel electric vehicles. They demonstrated driving skills by maneuvering an electric golf cart through an obstacle course.

Electrical Safety – This learning center taught students how to play it safe around high voltage power lines.

The 4-H Electric Camp is a joint venture of the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association and its member cooperatives, including Volunteer Energy Cooperative; University of Tennessee Extension; Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association and its municipal power systems; and the Tennessee Valley Authority.

VEC Names Three Vice Presidents

Melvin Holmes named Vice President of Operation Services

VEC has named Melvin Holmes as the new Vice President of Operations Services. Holmes assumed the position June 27, 2016, following the retirement of Clyde Jolley. Jolley began his career at VEC in 1974 and assumed the position of Vice President April 1, 1996. After 20 years in the position and 42 years at VEC, Jolley retired on June 30, 2016. Jolley plans to spend time with family and work on his farm.



Melvin Holmes

Murphy Succeeds Hurley at VEC

Cleveland, TN native David Murphy has succeeded Patty Hurley, Vice President of Marketing and Economic Development at VEC. Hurley had held the Vice President position for 13 years and retired on June 30, 2016. Murphy comes to VEC from TVA Cleveland Customer Service Center.



David Murphy

Matthew Teague selected as Vice President of Systems Planning and Engineering

VEC named Matthew Teague as the new Vice President of Systems Planning and Engineering. Teague began his career with VEC in 2006 as a Substation Engineer. Teague has been instrumental in upgrades and standardization of substations across the system.



Matthew Teague

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
 Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment
 Effective September 1, 2016

2.362¢

For the most current FCA information, visit www.vec.org

Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.