

Candidates Vying for VEC Board Positions



DISTRICT 3

Aubie Smith

Aubie Smith, a native of Ooltewah, has served on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors representing Hamilton County since 2001. He operates a 400-acre farm specializing in dairy replacement heifers.

He is a graduate of Ooltewah High School, where he was a member of the National Honor Society. He received an associate degree in business from Chattanooga State Technical Community College, and a BS degree in industrial management from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

Smith is on the board of directors for the Hamilton County Soil Conservation District and is a member of Farm Bureau and the Bradley County Farmer's Cooperative.

In addition to farming Smith is a school bus contractor for Hamilton County Schools. Smith and his wife, the former Tiffany Bingham, have a six-year-old daughter, Whitley.



DISTRICT 4

Gene Carmichael

Gene Carmichael, of Calhoun, has served on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors representing McMinn County since 1974. He is a dairy farmer.

He is a graduate of Calhoun High School and served in the National Guard from 1959 to 1965.

Carmichael has been an intermittent member of the McMinn Farmers Cooperative Board since 1985 and served on the Board of Directors of the Dairy Farmers of America in 2003. He is a member of Calhoun First Baptist Church.

Carmichael and his wife, Clare, have two sons, Russell and Rodney.



DISTRICT 7

Charles Fitch

Charles Fitch is an incumbent member of the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors and has represented VEC members in Roane and Loudon counties since 1968. He has been a VEC member since 1956. He and his wife, Pat, are residents of Roane County in the Kingston area. Fitch is a United States Army veteran where he served for three and one-half years.

Fitch is a retired stockyard manager and a farmer. He is also a member the Roane County Farm Bureau. He and his wife, Pat, are members of Tenmile Methodist Church.



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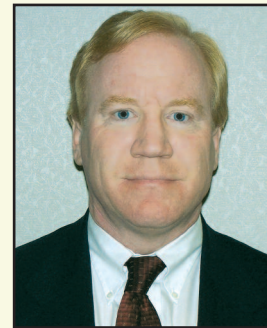
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Powerlines is produced by the Volunteer Energy Cooperative's Marketing & Economic Development Department as a service to customers. Comments and suggestions can be e-mailed to vec@vec.org or mailed to VEC Marketing & Economic Development Department, P.O. Box 277, Decatur, TN 37322.

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POWERLINES



Some Things Will Never Change

By Rody Blevins President/CEO

It may seem a little strange to many to see a new face alongside this President/CEO column in *Powerlines*. For years we've all grown accustomed to seeing the face and reading the thoughts of Bill Buchanan here each month.

Bill Buchanan retired in June leaving some pretty big shoes to fill. He has been a driving force behind Volunteer Energy Cooperative and a tireless worker on behalf of rural electric consumers. I feel honored to be selected by your board of directors to follow him as President and CEO of VEC.

It's a change for me and my family and it's a change for VEC. It also comes during a period of change in the electric industry across the Tennessee Valley.

TVA recently announced its intentions to raise the rates it charges power distributors like VEC. Your VEC Board of Directors, Bill Buchanan, VEC managers, and I have been hard at work over the past several weeks assessing the impact the new TVA rates will have on our operations and our customers.

The electric industry will also be impacted by the federal government's new Energy Bill and several other pieces of proposed legislation on the state and federal level.

But with all the changes, there will also be some things that do not change. Your board of directors, the management, and the staff at Volunteer Energy Cooperative are a dedicated group of professionals who will remain just as committed to meeting any challenges that may arise with the best interest of our members as their number one priority.

We remain dedicated to our mission: "To provide our customers reliable, safe, and efficient services in a courteous and timely manner at a competitive cost." And we will not lose sight of our vision: "To set the service standard for the providers of utility services and be among the best not-for-profit organizations in the United States."

*In a time of change, it's nice to know that
some things will never change.*

VEC Helps Finance Cumberland House Hospice



USDA Rural Development State Director Mary "Ruth" Tackett joined VEC President/CEO Bill Buchanan for groundbreaking ceremonies for Cumberland House on June 6.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) recently joined forces with USDA Rural Development and the Crossville Housing Authority to finance Crossville House, a residential home for individuals diagnosed with terminal illnesses.

The home is being built by Hospice of Cumberland County, Inc. VEC secured a \$100,000 zero-interest loan to assist with the

project and the Crossville Housing Authority secured a \$30,000 USDA Rural Development grant to assist with the project.

Groundbreaking ceremonies were conducted June 6 and joining VEC President/CEO Bill Buchanan for the event were USDA Rural Development State Director Mary "Ruth" Tackett, Carolyn Jensen, field representative for U.S. Sen. Bill Frist, Lindsay Botts, field representative for U.S. Sen. Lamar Alexander, Sammy Lowdermilk, Beecher Frazier, field representatives for U.S. Rep. Lincoln Davis, Crossville Mayor J.H. Graham, Cumberland County Mayor Brock Hill, and Don Alexander, executive director of the Crossville Housing Authority.

"We are pleased to be able to help with this project," Buchanan said. "Through our economic development program, as well as through other resources at our disposal, VEC is here to assist with community development."

The 4,067 square-foot, six-bed residential hospice care facility will serve as a residential home for individuals diagnosed with terminal illness who choose to spend their final days at home, but who either lack or do not have a competent caretaker at home or a proper residence.

VEC Customers Share

VEC Customers Reach Out to Friends and Neighbors

Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) customers funded grants totaling \$33,900 in May. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, a total of \$1,442,365.20 in grants has been awarded.

The deadline for grant applications is the last 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.

Organizations receiving grants in May include:

- Art Circle Public Library
- Meigs Ministries
- Monterey Senior Citizens Center
- Veterans Service Office
- Community Thrift Store
- Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Group
- Friends of the Picket County Library
- Nocata Civitan Club
- Kingston Public Library
- Fentress County Foster Care Association
- Cumberland County Rescue Squad Crewettes
- Sixth, Seventh, Eighth Grade Softball Club
- Byrdstown Lions Club
- Glade Creek Senior Citizens and Community Center
- Allardt Cloggers and Appalachian Heritage Program
- Rhea County Medical Services
- Meigs County High School Cheerleading Boosters
- Traditional Music Resource Center
- Spring City Cemetery Association
- South Polk Elementary PTO
- Byrdstown Senior Center
- McMinn County Living Heritage Museum
- Midway High School PTO
- His Hands Extended, Inc.,
- Midway Quarterback Club
- PCHS Science and Exploration Club
- Girl Scout Troops 149 and 449
- Polk County Education Foundation
- MAC Club



VEC Customers Share Board Member Nell Whitaker (center) presents a grant check to Brenda McKenzie and Mary Ann Bohland of Meigs County Ministries.

High School Juniors Tour Washington, D.C.



VEC Students pose in front of the U.S. Capitol Building. Pictured are, from left, Brandon Martin, Austin Parkison, Stephanie Lewis, and Ashley Logan.

Four high schools juniors from Volunteer Energy Cooperative's service area were among 114 Tennessee Students and about 1,800 students from across the country who attended the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association's 2005 Washington Youth Tour.

Ashley Logan of Pickett County High School, Stephanie Lewis of Monterey High School, Austin Parkison of Midway High School, and Brandon Martin of Polk County High School were VEC's participants in this year's trip.

Each of the 114 students was rewarded with an expense-paid trip to the nation's capital for writing award-winning essays showing the benefits of cooperative power for the 2005 Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest, sponsored by Tennessee's electric cooperatives.

The topic for this year's contest was "Electric Cooperatives: Going Beyond the Wires." Students across Tennessee were invited to write short stories, no longer than 900 words, showing electric cooperatives' commitment to their communities – a commitment that goes beyond providing electric service.



Ashley Logan arrives in Cincinnati for a brief layover before continuing her return trip to Chattanooga and Byrdstown following her week in Washington, D.C.

In and around Washington, students were able to visit the historical places they had studied in school, including the homes of two of America's founding fathers: Thomas Jefferson's Monticello and George Washington's Mount Vernon. And they were able to see many of the famous Washington, D.C., landmarks including the Jefferson, Lincoln, World War II, Korean War and Vietnam Veteran's



Brandon Martin chats with U.S. Congressman Harold Ford Jr., of Memphis, during a congressional breakfast held for Tennessee students.

memorials; White House; Smithsonian Museums complex; Library of Congress; Washington National Cathedral; and International Spy and Holocaust Memorial museums.

Students became closer to the legislative process, as they were able to meet their Congressmen on Capitol Hill. Their representatives gave them a V.I.P. tour of the U.S. Capitol and hosted a breakfast in the Rayburn House Office Building. Senators Bill Frist and Lamar Alexander posed with the Tennessee delegation for a picture on the Capitol steps before the breakfast.

Students also saw two ceremonies showcasing the honor, skill and valor of the United States military. Frist, students and adults watched in silence as members of the 3rd U.S. Infantry performed the ceremonial changing of the guard at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, where the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association placed a memorial wreath.

Later, they experienced the precision of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon and the music of the United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps at the Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C., Sunset Parade, performed in the shadow of the United States Marine Corps War Memorial.



VEC sponsored students meet with U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander on the steps of the U.S. Capitol during the tour. Pictured are, from left, Austin Parkison, Stephanie Lewis, Alexander, Ashley Logan, and Brandon Martin.

In addition to their free trip, the winners from each cooperative were eligible for financial assistance they could use to go to college. Scholarships of \$3,000, \$2,000 and \$1,000 were awarded for the top three essays in the state. The winners were announced at a Tennessee group meeting at their hotel just outside of Washington.

This year's first-place winner was Anna Harris of Murfreesboro (Middle Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation). Second place went to Sarah Bell of Tracy City (Sequachee Valley Electric Cooperative). And Abby Priddy of Jackson (Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corporation) was awarded third place.



VEC sponsored students meet with Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist on the steps of the U.S. Capitol during the tour. Pictured are, from left, Ashley Logan, Stephanie Lewis, Frist, Brandon Martin, and Austin Parkison.

Also while in Washington, A.J. Guerrero of Cookeville (Upper Cumberland Electric Membership Corporation) was selected Tennessee's representative to the Youth Leadership Council. She will attend the 2005 TECA Annual Meeting in Nashville and represent the state at the Youth Leadership Conference in Washington, D.C., and NRECA Annual Meeting in Orlando, Fla.

Everyone had a wonderful time in the nation's capitol. The students and adults enjoyed cooler-than-normal weather, perfect for outdoor sightseeing. Students thanked their local co-ops for making it possible for them to go on this once-in-a-lifetime trip to Washington, D.C., where they forged lifelong friendships with contest winners from across the state and experienced first-hand the history and activity of the nation's capitol.

Ashley Logan, of Byrdstown, is the daughter of Gene and Betty Logan. She is entering her senior year at Pickett County High School. Stephanie Lewis, of Monterey, is the daughter of Carrie Bonanan. She is entering her senior year at Monterey High School. Austin Parkison, of Kingston, is the son of Mike and Karen Parkison and is entering his senior year at Midway High School. Brandon Martin, of Delano, is the son of Mike and Teresa Martin. He is entering his senior year at Polk County High School.

The four students were sponsored by VEC on the all-expense paid trip and the trip was coordinated by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association.