

# GREAT HOLIDAY GIFTS!

## Electric Grills and Smokers make a great holiday gift.

Cooking and clean-up is a snap on these solid, American-made appliances. All operate on a standard household outlet.



**Stainless Double-Grid Electric Water Smoker**

Top-of-the-line model, stainless steel hood and body.

**\$149.99 + tax**



### Deluxe Electric Cart Grill

Food view window, sturdy construction, removable side trays, and lower shelf.

**\$134.99 + tax**

### Deluxe Electric Smoker/ Grill Combo

Grill or smoke foods easily with minimal clean-up. **\$77.99 + tax**



### The Meco Portable Electric Grill

A large cooking area fits neatly into this compact, tabletop design.

**\$66.00 + tax**



WR-300

## Midland Weather Radio

Available at your local VEC Customer Service Center

Present this coupon to receive \$10.00 off the regular purchase price. Offer expires 12/31/06

**\$10**

**\$10**

The New VEC Trucks Are Here!!! Only \$5 Per Smile



Bucket Truck \$5.00 plus tax



Pick-up Truck \$5.00 plus tax

Available at your local Volunteer Energy Cooperative Customer Service Center



## Energy Efficiency Pays Off at Tax Time Too

By Rody Blevins President/CEO

Not many companies will tell you how to use LESS of their products and services. But VEC, and other electric cooperatives, aren't like other businesses.

As a not-for-profit cooperative that is owned by our customers and operated solely for the benefit of our customers, VEC is happy to share information that can

help save you money on your monthly electric bill and live more comfortably. Incorporating energy efficiency into your lifestyle is also good for the environment. And for those of you who are looking for ways to save on your federal taxes, it's not too late to take advantage of energy-efficiency tax credits that will be available for tax years 2006 and 2007.

The Energy Policy Act of 2005 (EPACT), signed by President Bush on August 8, 2005, offers consumers and businesses federal tax credits beginning in January 2006 for purchasing fuel-efficient hybrid-electric vehicles and energy-efficient appliances and products. Most of these tax credits remain in effect through 2007.

### About Tax Credits

A tax credit is generally more valuable than an equivalent tax deduction because a tax credit reduces tax dollar-for-dollar, while a deduction only removes a percentage of the tax that is owed. Beginning in tax year 2006, consumers will be able to itemize purchases on their federal income tax form, which will lower the total amount of tax they owe the government.

### Home Energy Efficiency Improvement Tax Credits

Consumers who purchase and install specific products, such as energy-efficient windows, insulation, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling equipment in the home can receive a tax credit of up to \$500 beginning in January 2006.

Improvements must be installed in or on the taxpayer's principal residence in the United States. Home improvement tax credits apply for improvements made between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2007.

### Automobile Tax Credits

Buying and driving a fuel-efficient vehicle and purchasing and installing energy-efficient appliances and products provide many benefits such as better gas mileage – meaning lower gasoline costs, fewer emissions, lower energy bills, increased indoor comfort, and reduced air pollution.

Individuals and businesses who buy or lease a new hybrid gas-electric car or truck are eligible for, and can receive, an income tax credit of \$250-\$3,400 – depending on the fuel economy and the weight of the vehicle. Hybrid vehicles that use less gasoline than the average vehicle of similar weight and that meet an emissions standard qualify for the credit.

More information about the tax advantages of energy efficiency is available at [www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm](http://www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm) and energy saving tips are available at [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org) and at <http://www.energyright.com/index.htm>.

## VEC Lowering Rates

TVA has announced a 4.5% decrease on wholesale rates to take effect in October. In spite of rising costs for materials and the increasing costs of employee benefits, Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) is able to pass along a cut in residential rates to its customers. The average residential customer will save about 3.2%.

Below is an example of how the decrease will affect a typical VEC residential customer.

Example – Monthly Usage 1000 kWh

| Before Rate Decrease             | After Rate Decrease              | Decrease |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------|
| Energy charge: .07477            | Energy charge: .07238            | -.00239  |
| Total charge for energy: \$74.77 | Total charge for energy: \$72.38 | -\$2.39  |
| Customer charge: \$11.60         | Customer charge: \$11.60         | -0       |
| Total bill: \$86.37              | Total bill: \$83.98              | -\$2.39  |

\*Because every customer has different usage patterns, not every customer's bill will show the same savings.

### Project Deserve Needs You

Volunteer Energy Cooperative's Project Deserve program allows you to help the elderly, handicapped, low income and unemployed with their electric bills in emergency situations. You can do this by pledging a specified amount of money to be added to your monthly bill.

All funds collected through Project Deserve go directly to an energy fund. No funds will be used to administer the program. Eligibility will be determined solely by human resource agencies and/or community relief groups in all or portions of the VEC's 17-county service area.

Winter weather is on the way, and this is the time of year when more families ask Project Deserve for assistance with their electric bill. Your contribution to Project Deserve will help these families in their time of emergency.

You may contribute monthly or you may make a one-time contribution. One-time contributions should be mailed to Project Deserve, P.O. Box 277, Decatur, TN 37322. Should you ever wish to cancel your monthly Project Deserve contribution, you can do so by contacting your local VEC customer service center.



# VEC Customers *Share*

Your Change Changes Things

By allowing their electric bills to be rounded up to the next dollar Volunteer Energy Cooperative customers funded \$35,000 in community service grants in August. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, a total of \$1,930,951 in grants has been awarded to numerous community service projects. 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](http://www.vec.org).

## Organizations receiving grants in August include:

Midway Elementary School PTO - \$3,850; Glade Creek Senior Citizens and Community Center, Sparta - \$2,500; E.K. Baker School PTO - \$2,500; Imagination Library of Rhea County - \$2,200; The Borderlands Foundation, Byrdstown - \$2,000; Crossville-Cumberland County Youth Center - \$2,000; Food Bank Support Group, Allardt - \$2,000; Cumberland County Rescue Squad - \$1,800; Polk County Education Foundation - \$1,500; "Give a Kid a Chance" Back-to-School Outreach Program - \$1,500; Candlelighters Cancer Support Group Fun Day - \$1,500; Bradley Initiative Credit Union - \$1,500; Fentress County Senior Center - \$1,000; Cumberland County Imagination Library - \$1,000; Cleveland/Bradley County Chamber Foundation - \$1,000; Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region, Cleveland - \$1,000; Miracle Lake, Etowah - \$1,000; Adult and Family Education of McMinn County - \$500; Monterey Ministers Association - \$500; Michigan Avenue School PTO - \$500; McMinn County Historical Society - \$500; Brown Elementary Football Boosters - \$500; Bradley Healthcare and Rehab - \$500; Stone Memorial High School Football Boosters - \$500; Linsdale Community Services - \$500; Creative Compassion, Inc., Crossville - \$500;



### Junior Achievement

VEC President/CEO Rody Blevins, right, presents a grant check to Sandy Moore, president of Junior Achievement of the Ocoee Region.

## Dolly Parton Backing Effort to Provide Books for Youngsters

In 1996, Dolly Parton launched an effort to benefit the children of her home county in East Tennessee. She wanted to foster a love of reading among her county's preschool children and their families. So she decided to mail a new, age-appropriate book each month to every child under 5 in Sevier County.

The program was so successful many other communities have joined in to provide the Imagination Library to children.

A community must make the program accessible to all preschool children in their area. The community pays for the books and mailing, promotes the program, registers the children, and enters the information into the database.

From there The Dollywood Foundation takes over and manages the system to deliver the books to the home. You can find out more of the operational details on other pages in this website – so what are waiting for! Hundreds of communities are providing books to hundreds of thousands of children.

To find out whether your community participates and to learn how to sign up your preschool child visit the Imagination Library website at [www.imaginationlibrary.com](http://www.imaginationlibrary.com).

## VEC Protects Personal Information

### Policy Regarding Privacy of Customer Information

Volunteer Energy Cooperative values you as an owner and as a customer and understands how important it is to protect the personal information that you have entrusted to us. We, therefore, treat such personal information in accordance with applicable law and the provisions of this policy.

#### Information We May Collect

We only collect information that is needed to serve you and administer your cooperative's business. We may collect nonpublic personal information about you from the following sources:

- Information we receive from you on applications or other forms;
- Information about your business transactions with us or others; and
- Information we receive from a consumer reporting agency.

#### Protection of Your Information

We are committed to upholding our pledge to maintain security of our customers' personal and accounting information. To ensure such information is used only in the manner we have described in this notice, we restrict access to your personal and account information to those employees who need to know that information to provide products or services to you. We maintain physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to maintain the confidentiality of the information we collect and to guard against its unauthorized access.

#### Information We May Disclose

All of the information that we collect, as described above, may be disclosed when necessary to assist us in servicing your accounts to third parties as designated by you, in response to subpoenas or court orders, and to a credit bureau or similar information reporting agency. We do not disclose any nonpublic personal information about our customers to anyone, except as permitted by law.

We may disclose the information that we collect, as described above, to companies that perform marketing services on our behalf. This information may be shared with our affiliates so they can market their services. However, Volunteer Energy Cooperative does not share personal customer information with unaffiliated third parties for any reason.

If you decide to terminate your relationship with us, we will continue to adhere to the privacy policies and practices described in this notice.

#### More Information

Questions regarding this policy can be directed to the Office of the President/CEO, Volunteer Energy Cooperative, P.O. Box 277, Decatur, TN 37322 or to your local VEC service center.

## Mind Games

### Rhea County Students Impress in World Competition

A group of students from Rhea Central Elementary School soared through the Odyssey of the Mind State Finals this spring and placed 13th overall in the World Finals.

Odyssey of the Mind is a creative problem solving competition that features events such as "The Great Parade" in which teams build a float that must



Members of the Rhea Central Elementary School Odyssey of the mind team include: (back row, left to right) Stephanie Blank, Tyler Cruver, Nick Blank, Wendy Danniels, Nick Middlebrooks, Stacey Holcomb (front row) Chris Danniels, and their coach Eva Cruver.

"Of the 58 teams in their Division, Rhea Central placed 13th overall," Cruver said. "That's up from 35th last year which was their first year to compete."

Cruver said the team, which includes Stephanie Blank, Nick Blank Wendy Danniels, Chris Danniels, Nick Middlebrooks, Stacey Holcomb and Tyler Cruver, accepted an ambitious challenge and it paid off.

"Most teams only do one problem, our team did three for state – won two – and did those two at world," she said. "No other team in Tennessee has done this. They earned the highest score at state for all three of their spontaneous problems."

A total of 800 teams from more than 20 countries converged on Ames, Iowa, the home of Iowa State University, for the World Finals. NASA is one of the event's sponsors and Microsoft® selected Odyssey of the Mind to participate in its Partners in Learning Program® with the goal of bring its unique teaching style into classrooms across the U.S.

change its appearance three times during the parade; and "Tech Transfer" in which students create a device that will transport and deliver items.

The competition also includes a "Spontaneous" competition in which students must solve a problem on the spot.

The Rhea County team took first place in Spontaneous and Tech Transfer on the state level. At the World Finals in Ames, Iowa the team placed first among 58 other teams to garner the world title.

Team coach Eva Cruver said the Rhea Central team was the only group to score a perfect 100 on their spontaneous problem at the World Finals.