

VEC Customers *Share*

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

By allowing their electric bills to be rounded up to the next dollar Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) customers funded \$33,600 in community service grants in May. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, a total of \$2,233,101 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.

In May, the VEC Customers Share board completed a commitment to provide \$10,000 in grants to three separate organizations. The Fair Park Senior Citizens Center in Crossville received a \$5,050 grant in May to reach the \$10,000 mark. Habitat for Humanity of Cleveland was awarded a \$1,500 grant in May bringing their total to \$10,000 and Polk County Friends of the Library received a \$2,500 grant bringing their total for the year to \$10,000.



Fair Park Senior Center. VEC President/CEO Roddy Blevins, left, and VEC Customers Share Board Member Roger Thackston, right, present a grant check to, from left, Quineth Roberts, Eddie Liscovec, Charline Picard, and Frank Baker of the Fair Park Senior Center.

Organizations receiving grants in May include:

Monterey Branch Library - \$2,000; McMinn County Foster Care Association - \$1,500; South Roane County Volunteer Fire Department - \$1,500; Claxton Community Volunteer Emergency Services, Athens - \$1,500; Manna House Ministries, Jamestown - \$1,000; BASIC of TN, Inc., Birchwood - \$1,000; Cleveland State Community College Foundation - \$1,000; Candlelighters Family Support Group - \$1,000; Cumberland County School Supply Depot - \$1,000; American Legion Post 238, Crossville - \$996; Southeast Powerstrokes, Decatur - \$800; Friends of the Library of Spring City - \$800; South Fentress Outdoor Sports - \$750; Fentress County Retired Teachers Association - \$750; Rhea County Health Council - \$600; Meigs Senior Center - \$600; Meigs Middle School Archery Club - \$600; Pickett County Relay for Life - \$500; American Legion Post 68, Athens - \$500; Nocatee Civitan Club, Decatur - \$500; Pickett County Friends of the Library - \$500;



Polk County Friends of the Library. VEC Customers Share Board Member Davis Dunn, right, presents a grant check to Jenny Rogers, center, and Angela Bates Lewis of the Polk County Friends of the Library.

Midway Quarterback Club - \$500; Snowhill Recreation League 7 & 8 Year-Old Softball, Ooltewah - \$500; Fairfield Glade Lions Club Charities - \$500; Byrdstown Senior Center - \$500; Hull-York DAV Chapter 5, Byrdstown - \$500; Candies Creek Baptist Church Youth Group, Charleston - \$500; Polk County Youth Baseball - \$400; Prospect Elementary School PTO, Cleveland - \$350; Bradley Healthcare and Rehab - \$329; Boy Scout Troop 175, Crossville - \$250; Crossville Housing Authority - \$225; and Linsdale Community Services, Delano - \$200.



Habitat for Humanity. VEC President/CEO Roddy Blevins, left, joins with VEC Customers Share Board Member Bill Sparkman, right, in presenting a grant check to, from left, Matthew Carlson and Teresa Carvin of Habitat for Humanity of Cleveland.

Candidates Vying for VEC Board Positions

As of press time, the following candidates have expressed their intention to run for the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors. A finalized ballot will be mailed to VEC members in the applicable districts with the official candidates included.

District 10 White, Putnam, and Overton counties

Keith Phillips

Keith Phillips is a graduate of Monterey High School and the Kentucky School of Mortuary. He is the owner and operator of Goff Funeral Home in Monterey. He is a member of the National Funeral Directors Association, the Upper Cumberland Funeral Directors Association, the Monterey Masonic Lodge, and the Monterey Lions Club. He formerly served as a volunteer fireman. He is a member of Monterey United Methodist Church where he served as youth leader from 2002 to 2005.



Earl D. Stephens

Earl D. Stephens is a graduate of Stearns High School in Kentucky. He served in the U.S. Air Force from 1956 to 1960. He retired from Dayton Power and Light after 38 years, worked for electric contractors in New York, and has seven years experience as a Tennessee electrical inspector. He has served as a short-term missionary in Venezuela, Peru, and the United Arab Emirates. He attends Cookeville First Baptist Church.



District 11 Fentress, Morgan, and Scott counties

Billy D. (Bill) Bowden

Billy D. (Bill) Bowden is a graduate of York Institute in Jamestown. He is a newspaper publisher/editor. He formerly was a Jaycee and a director for the Fentress County Chamber of Commerce and the Tennessee Press Association. Currently he serves as Jamestown Rotary Club president, and as a director for the Fentress Water Utility District. He attends Jamestown First United Methodist Church.



William J. (Butch) Campbell

William J. (Butch) Campbell is an attorney, businessman, and farmer. He is a graduate of York Institute, Tennessee Technological University, and the Nashville School of Law. He served four years in the U.S. Army and spent one year in South Vietnam. He serves on the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Commission and is a director for Union Bank in Jamestown.



Darren Gunter

Darren Gunter is an insurance agent at The Rains Agency in Crossville where he was named Producer of the Year in 2002. He graduated from Clarkrange High School and has a B.S. in Agriculture from Tennessee Technological University. He is a member of the Rotary Club and the Society of Certified Insurance Counselors. He has been a member of the National Association of Homebuilders and the general Advisory Counsel of the Tennessee Technology Center. He attends Mt. Gilead Methodist Church.



District 12 Pickett County

Larry Storie

Larry Storie is a graduate of Pickett County High School and a lifelong resident of Pickett County. He has been president of the Pickett County Farm Bureau since 1996, serving as a member of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Commodity Committee. He is a Tennessee Master Beef Producer and a member of the Pickett County Soil Conservation Board. He has served on the Overton-Pickett Farmers Co-op Board for 20 years. In 1990, he was named the Pickett County Grassland Farmer of the Year. He has served on the VEC Board of Directors since 1996. He attends Williams Chapel Church.





Ballots Coming Soon to Two VEC Districts

VEC Board of Director election ballots will soon be mailed out to VEC members in District 10 (White, Putnam, and Overton counties) and District 11 (Fentress, Morgan, and Scott counties). District 12 (Pickett County) is an uncontested race this year.

Ballots will be mailed on August 28th; completed ballots must be received at the offices of the election auditor Henderson, Hutcherson, and McCollough by 5 p.m. Eastern time on September 20th.

Information on the candidates appears elsewhere in this issue of *Powerlines*.

Why Buy Stamps?

When you can pay your bill online at:

www.vec.org

www.vec.org

VEC

VOLUNTEER ENERGY COOPERATIVE

vec@vec.org

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.

August 2017

POWERLINES

Newsletter of Volunteer Energy Cooperative



Climate Change Legislation Appears Inevitable

By Rody Blevins President/CEO

There are some who believe that the science supporting global warming/climate change is questionable. Others contend that the science is solid and doubters are merely protecting their own interests. But wherever you stand on the issue, one thing is just about as certain as tomorrow's sunrise: Congress will soon pass some sort of legislation to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

When I, along with other electricity industry professionals, met with lawmakers in Washington recently, their mood was clear. Legislators believe they must pass measures to address greenhouse gas emissions.

This is a complex scientific issue, but the solutions are likely to come from the political arena. That is why I would hate to see lawmakers rush into solutions that seem more politically popular rather than solutions that scientific evidence suggests would be the most effective.

The best science indicates that there will be no single "silver bullet" that will solve our global warming problems with a single strategy. Some lawmakers seem to think that switching to renewable energy such as wind and solar power will suddenly take care of this issue. But the technology to generate the electricity we need through wind and solar production does not exist.

Solving our global warming problem will not be nearly as easy as that. It will take economy-wide solutions applied to all industry sectors. This isn't just a utility problem. Developing and putting solutions in place will be expensive. That's why lawmakers will also need to consider the financial impact on rural and urban consumers and include "safety valves" that will protect consumers and the economy as a whole against severe negative impacts.

Electric industry leaders also feel it is important to include an economy-wide focus on energy efficiency for all energy uses and consider regional differences that can impact the effectiveness and fairness of any programs.

We've seen in the past that necessity is indeed the mother of invention and I expect we will see that in the next 20 years or so our industry will again undergo a technical revolution. But it is likely that this technical revolution in the electric industry will carry a price tag for us all.

We will need to keep that price tag manageable by making energy efficiency a top priority and by making sure public-owned electricity generators and distributors have a voice in the solution process. Since we are owned and operated by those who use our service, it makes sense that we can be powerful advocates for consumers in this process.

High School Juniors Tour Washington, D.C.

Three high school 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 2007 Washington Youth Tour.

Jessica Tompkins of York Agricultural Institute, Danielle Rose of Cumberland County High School, and Erin Penrod of Meigs 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 2007 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 800 words, showing electric cooperatives' commitment to their communities – a commitment that goes beyond providing electric service.



Jessica and Erin pose in front of the White House.

Stephen Clukey of Walker Valley High School wrote the short story that was judged best overall in the VEC service district. Clukey was unable to make the trip however. His story was forwarded for state-wide judging where scholarships were awarded to the state's top three finishers.

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 memorials; White House; Smithsonian Museums complex; Library of Congress; Washington National Cathedral; and the National Archives. Students also took in a Potomac Nationals baseball game. Students became closer to the legislative process, as they were able to meet Congressmen Lincoln Davis on Capitol Hill. Davis gave them a V.I.P. tour of the U.S. Capitol. A number of Tennessee lawmakers hosted a breakfast in the Rayburn House Office Building. Senators Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander spoke with students and posed for pictures with the Tennessee delegation on the Capitol steps before the breakfast.

Students also saw ceremonies showcasing the honor, skill and valor of the United States military. First, 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.



U.S. Representative Lincoln Davis poses with Danielle Rose and Jessica Tompkins.



Senator Bob Corker, left, poses with Jessica Tompkins, Danielle Rose, and Erin Penrod at the U.S. Capitol.

Jessica Tompkins is the daughter of Rhonda and Allen Tompkins of Jamestown. Danielle Rose is the daughter of Lisa and Roy Rose of Crossville. Erin Penrod is the daughter of Lori and Marc Penrod of Decatur and Steven Clukey is the son of Sandra and Tony Clukey of Cleveland.

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