

# Ballots Coming Soon to VEC's Hamilton County District

VEC Board of Director election ballots will soon be mailed out to VEC members in District 3 Hamilton County. District 4 (McMinn County) and District 7 (Roane and Loudon Counties) are uncontested races this year.

District 3 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 15th. VEC customers who hold primary membership in this district are eligible to vote and will get a ballot in the mail. These are mailed separately from the electric bills.

The voting for board of directors is based on VEC memberships, not the number of meters that are assigned to a member. Each VEC membership receives one vote in the election.

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

## Candidates Vying for VEC Board Positions

The following candidates have qualified to run for positions on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors in districts in which the current directors' terms of office are expiring.

There will be no contested election in Districts 4 and 7. Ballots for the District 3 election will be mailed August 28th.

### District 3 Hamilton County

#### Aubie Smith

Aubie Smith, a native of Ooltewah, is the incumbent district 3 board member. He operates a 400-acre farm specializing in beef cattle. In addition to farming, Smith is a school bus contractor for Hamilton County Schools.

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 Bachelor of Science degree in industrial management from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.



Smith

#### Denise Lee

Denise Lee is running to represent Hamilton County on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors. She is a self-employed bookkeeper and lives in Harrison, Tennessee. She graduated from Ooltewah High School and holds an associate degree in electronic medical records from Miller-Motte College where she graduated as the valedictorian.

Denise is a widow and attends Savannah Bay Baptist Church. She founded Handful of Purpose, a 501c3 which is a ministry to homeless in Chattanooga. She has also been the president of the McDonald Cemetery Association for the past 10 years.



Lee

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### District 4 McMinn County

#### Mike Frazier

Mike Frazier, a native of Riceville, has served on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative Board of Directors representing McMinn County since 2013. He is the director of schools for the City of Etowah. A graduate of Cleveland High School, Frazier earned his Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, his Masters of Arts degree from Tennessee Tech, his Ed.S. from Lincoln Memorial University and his Ed.D. from East Tennessee State University.

He serves on the Board of Directors of Coordinated Charities, ASCD, TOSS, TSBA and also serves as chairman of the Board of Deacons at Eastanella Baptist Church. He was named Principal of the Year in 2007, has earned the John M. Davis Award, and has been inducted into the TSSAA Basketball Officials Hall of Fame. He also serves on the Board of Directors for SACS/CASI and he will be serving as Headmaster/Consultant for Valley Christian Academy.

He and his wife, Kathy Landers Frazier, have four children: Heath and his wife, Stacie; Ryne and his wife, Beth; Justin and his wife, Katie; and Leah and her husband, Justin Hicks and 13 grandchildren under ten years old.



Frazier

### District 7 Roane and Loudon Counties

#### Tim Handler

Tim Handler is a Kingston resident and a senior account manager for Nexeo Solutions LLC. He has represented Roane and Loudon counties on the VEC Board of Directors since 2012. He is a graduate of Warren Hills High School in Washington, New Jersey and earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in chemistry from Maryville College.

He and his wife, Cindy, are Kingston residents and attend Luminary United Methodist Church. They have two children Whitney and Devin.



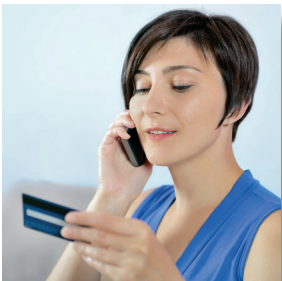
Handler

## VEC Accepts Payments by Telephone

No one likes paying bills, but Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) tries to make paying your electricity bill as painless as possible by providing a variety of payment options. VEC accepts online payments, in person payments, electronic bank draft payments, and payments by mail. VEC also accepts MasterCard®, Visa®, and Discover®, as well as check payments by telephone. Full or partial payments are accepted by phone and there's no extra service charge added.

To make a payment, customers need to have their VEC account number which can be found on their billing statement. To pay by credit or debit card, customers also need to provide the credit card number, the expiration date, and the security code from the back of the card. To pay by check customers need to provide their bank's routing number - which can be found at the bottom of the check - and their account number - which can also be found at the bottom of the check.

VEC's Interactive Voice Response (IVR) System will walk customers through the process with clear and easy-to-follow instructions. Customers can dial their local VEC customer service center to make a telephone payment.



## Broadband and VEC

As the manager of an electric cooperative, I field questions concerning many different topics. Members often ask about the cost of service, or why their power recently went out. At other times I get questions about rumored businesses that are coming to town, or when and where the company's annual meeting will be. But the one question I hear more frequently than all the rest concerns the availability of high speed internet. Everyone wants to know, "when will VEC offer broadband internet in my community?"

At the beginning of the 2017 Tennessee General Assembly, Governor Bill Haslam introduced legislation that would allow Tennessee Electric Cooperatives to provide retail broadband service to their members. For years, state law had prohibited electric cooperatives from offering telecommunication services. The bill known as the Tennessee Broadband Accessibility Act was written to allow cooperatives, such as Volunteer Energy (VEC), to finally enter the retail broadband market. After a number of amendments to the bill, the state senate voted on Monday, April 3, and the state house on Monday, April 10, to pass the bill, both with overwhelming support.

Once the bill was signed into law, cooperatives across the state began planning for the introduction of broadband services. VEC actually started working on a business model a number of months in advance of the legislation becoming law, anticipating the forthcoming change.

VEC currently operates 33 electric substations, of which 24 are interconnected with VEC owned fiber optic cable. The remaining substations are connected using Ethernet radios. VEC is in the process of expanding this fiber network, and eventually, all of our substations will be connected with VEC owned fiber. In addition, VEC is currently investigating the feasibility of constructing additional fiber optic middle mile loops, from which fiber to the home could eventually be connected.

Although VEC is determined to assist our members, the current challenge is our ability to make fiber to the home available to all of our membership. The cost to install fiber optics is around \$20,000 per mile of line. VEC needs both time and money to build a fiber optic backbone across the electric system, which covers all or part of 17 Tennessee Counties, and includes over 10,000 miles of electric line. VEC hopes to start a small pilot project as early as the second half of



*VEC is committed to serving our rural communities with high speed internet... communities that other local providers have overlooked.*



Rody Blevins  
President/CEO  
Volunteer Energy Cooperative

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The VECustomers Share program funded \$29,000 in community service grants in June. Since the inception of the program in October 2001, more than \$6.1 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](http://www.vec.org).



VECustomers Share Board member Joyce Woods presented a grant check to the Unaka District – Great Smoky Mountains Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

### Organizations receiving grants in June

Polk County High School Business Leaders of America	\$650	Monterey High School Theatre Department	\$250
Polk County High School Skills USA	\$400	Monterey Civitan Club	\$500
Polk County High School Technology Students Association	\$650	My Brother's Keeper of SE TN, INC.	\$500
Polk County High School Softball Team	\$200	Monterey Lions Club Disaster Response Team	\$250
Polk County High School Cross Country Booster Club	\$400	TN Club Lamb Producers	\$400
Amvets Post #13	\$750	Meigs County FFA Chapter	\$400
Stone Memorial High School	\$600	Midway Quarter Back Club	\$1,000
Rhea County High School Eagle Anglers	\$1,250	Midway Youth Cheerleading Organization	\$1,000
Tennessee Hemophilia & Bleeding Disorder Foundation	\$500	Champ Ferguson/Standing Stone Camp	
Meigs County Fair Association	\$1,000	2014 Sons of Confederate Veterans	\$250
Benton Fall Festival Booster Club	\$200	Dragon Renaissance	\$500
Wilson Athletic Booster Club	\$250	Ooltewah High School Band Boosters	\$1,500
Fentress County Fair Association	\$750	Fentress County Food Bank	\$1,000
Niota Rural Volunteer Fire Department	\$500	Fentress County Senior Softball Team	\$250
Children's Garden Path	\$250	Peavine Care Center	\$250
Obed Watershed Community Association	\$1,000	Pickett County High School Cheerleaders	\$1,000
Cumberland Mountain Mental Health Center	\$750	National Center for Youth Issues	\$500
The Caring Place	\$1,250	Back Pack Food Program - Monterey	
Fellowship of Christian Athletes - Upper Cumberland Area	\$250	Ministerial Association	\$1,000
Tennessee Valley Theatre	\$1,250	Grace and Mercy Ministries	\$1,500
American Legion Post 81	\$500	Meigs County Historical Society - Veterans Courtyard	\$350
Crossville Youth Baseball & Softball	\$500	Downtown Summer Nights	\$500
		The Art Guild at Fairfield Glade	\$500
		Art Circle Public Library Foundation	\$250
		Pickett County Relay for Life	\$1,500



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2017, but the reality is that a larger deployment of the system will not start until 2018 and thereafter.

This challenge does include a silver lining however. The state legislature recognized the cost of such investments into the state electric grid, so the Broadband Accessibility Act not only authorized cooperatives to offer retail broadband, but it also allocated \$10 million per year to aid electric cooperatives with the construction of their fiber optic infrastructures. This state funding could provide a small part of the infrastructure cost for a fiber optic system. Since revenues from the sale of electricity cannot be used to fund the fiber optic network, these state funds are an essential part of getting our broadband service off the ground.

As we work on the broadband buildout, we ask that you remember a few things. One, the VEC service area is vast. To execute a new business plan and to bring the service to fruition will take a number of years. Also, the installation of fiber optic cable is a costly and lengthy undertaking. VEC will work as quickly as possible, utilizing all of its assets to expedite the project, but the timing of the roll out will be limited by the scope of the project. As we work to get our electric system fully connected, we only ask you for one thing, please remain patient. High speed internet is coming.

## Move Over and Save Lives

My mom spent a good bit of my childhood trying to teach me important lessons. I am certain I would be a better person today had I heeded her counsel. Two of the things I remember most was her advice to pay attention and to be respectful.

In 2011, following efforts by Tennessee's electric cooperatives and municipal utilities, the state's Move Over law was revised to not only include police, firefighters and other first responders, but utility workers as well. Unfortunately, motorists do not always heed the law.

Our linemen often talk about the dangers of working along the side of the road. They routinely share stories of motorists who speed through work zones, passing far too close to our linemen and equipment. Many times they see the driver distracted by their radio, phone or something else in the vehicle.

The requirements of the move over law are simple. On a four lane road, if safety and traffic conditions allow, a driver approaching a utility vehicle with flashing lights should move into the far lane. On a two lane road or when changing lanes is not possible, a driver should reduce their speed.

Electric co-op vehicles aren't the only utility vehicles covered; service vehicles used by municipal electric systems, telephone companies and utility districts are also protected by the law.

Volunteer Energy Cooperative linemen perform an important job for our community. Changing lanes or slowing down to give them a little space is a simple courtesy that could save a life.

Let's make our moms proud. Pay attention and be respectful when you are behind the wheel.

More information about the law is available at [moveovertennessee.org](http://moveovertennessee.org).



## Volunteer Energy Announces Scholarship Recipients

Volunteer Energy Cooperative has announced four recipients of the Lillard-Shadow Scholarships for 2017.

**Bryan Asberry**, son of Charles and Melissa Asberry, is a 2017 graduate of Alvin C. York Agricultural Institute and the winner of the Jamestown Service Area Lillard-Shadow Scholarship. He plans to attend the University of Tennessee at Knoxville for mechanical engineering. Bryan graduated at the top of his class with a 4.0 GPA.

Crossville Service Area Lillard-Shadow scholarship winner **Katie Nicole Bilbrey**, daughter of Amanda and Stephen Bilbrey, is a 2017 graduate of Monterey High School. She plans to attend East Tennessee State University and pursue a pre-medicine degree. Katie graduated with a 4.0 from Monterey High School. During her high school years she volunteered with peer tutoring, Operation Christmas Child, and Kid Kuntry Daycare. Katie was best described by one of her teacher's as "One who is constantly doing the right thing and making the right decision."

Walker Valley High School graduate and Cleveland Service Area Lillard-Shadow scholarship recipient **Morgan Mantooth** plans to attend Lee University in Cleveland, TN. Morgan is the daughter of Marsha Mantooth. She graduated from Walker Valley in 2017 with a 4.0. At Lee she plans to pursue a degree in Nursing. Morgan has a history of serving others as she participated in the Special Olympics, along with the Junior Civitan Club at the Ronald McDonald House, with Tri-State Therapeutic Riding Center and for the Salvation Army.

Meigs County High School graduate **Allyson Stotts** is the Decatur Service Area winner of the Lillard Shadow Scholarship. The daughter of Nancy Moses, Andrew Stotts (deceased), and step-father James Moses, Allyson graduated with 4.0. She will be attending the University of Tennessee to major in Audiology and Speech Pathology. Allyson has a history of volunteering including but not limited to Operation Military Kids, Read Across America, Operation Christmas Child and Cards for Nepal.

This scholarship program began in 2003 as a way to honor Willis A. Shadow and J. W. Lillard, founders of the Meigs County Power Association which would ultimately become Volunteer Energy Cooperative. Four \$2,000 scholarships are awarded to high school seniors each year by VEC using an independent panel of judges.



Bryan Asberry



Katie Nicole Bilbrey



Morgan Mantooth



Allyson Stotts

## Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)

Residential & Outdoor Lighting Fuel Cost Adjustment  
Effective July 1, 2017

# 2.396¢

For the most current FCA information, visit [www.vec.org](http://www.vec.org)  
Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.

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