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The Tennessee Magazine

August 2010

Washington Youth Tour



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Join us for **YOUR** annual meeting August 7

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation invites you to your annual members' meeting Saturday morning, Aug. 7, at Crockett County High School in Alamo.

"It's a way we say 'thank you' for allowing us to provide your electric service, and it's a time our customer-owners can participate in their cooperative's business meeting and enjoy a morning of good, family fun," says Gibson EMC President and CEO Dan Rodamaker.

Registration, a health fair and exhibits will open at 8 a.m. Each customer-owner who registers will receive a gift and be eligible to win door prizes awarded throughout the morning, while the health fair, exhibits, entertainment and lunch will be available to everyone.

Adult door prizes will include twelve \$100 electric bill credits, an electric grill, an electric smoker and two Jiffy Steamers. Customer-owners' children will be eligible to win an MP3 player and an electric scooter.

The health fair will offer a variety of tests, including a comprehensive metabolic panel for \$5.50 and a lipid panel cholesterol test for \$10. Both of these panels require eight hours of fasting. The prostate-specific antigen test will cost \$10, and the bone density test will be free. Other screenings will be available, most of which will be free.

Energy exhibits will provide information about Gibson EMC's many programs and services, with an emphasis on how you can conserve energy and save on your electric bill.

In addition, businesses and civic groups will showcase

and sell a variety of merchandise and services.

For young people, there will be face-painting, inflatable jumpers and costume character Louie the Lightning Bug.

At 9:15 a.m., musician and artist Scott Myatt will perform. Well known locally for his mellow music, Myatt performs a soothing mix of ballads, folk and blues from artists like James Taylor, Dan Fogelberg, Eric Clapton and a host of other icons of the "singer-songwriter movement" who had their heyday in the '70s.

Crabb Revival will take the stage at 10 a.m. The band includes former members of the Grammy-nominated, Dove Award-winning Crabb Family Band. Crabb Revival blends

Crabb Family traditions with a sound also appreciated by a younger audience. This talented group has come into its own with a Dove Award nomination, a Breakthrough Artist Award, Gospel Music Channel's Genre Winner for 2008 Album of the Year, an honorable mention in All Genres and many other individual award nominations.

During the business meeting at 11 a.m., Gibson EMC's leaders will

provide an update on the co-op's operation. They will present a financial report and talk about the significant activities that have taken place during the past fiscal year as well as their expectations for Gibson EMC's future.

Afterwards, free sack lunches of a barbecue sandwich or hot dog, potato chips and a soft drink or bottle of water will be available.

So come and join the fun on Saturday, Aug. 7.



Crabb Revival is the featured entertainment at this year's annual meeting.

Annual Meeting Official Notice

Saturday, Aug. 7, 2010, at Crockett County High School, 2014 Highway 88, Alamo

Registration will begin at 8 a.m., and the business meeting will begin at 11 a.m., at which time the following actions will take place:

1. Report of officers, trustees and committees.
2. Any unfinished or new business.

If you are a member with special needs and you plan to attend

this meeting, please contact the cooperative at 731-855-4740, ext. 1611, by Aug. 4 so we can try to accommodate you.

Sincerely,

Don Leathers, Secretary-Treasurer, Board of Trustees

A message from your manager

Help keep electric bills affordable

School's out, vacations are under way and the heat of summer seems as if it will never end. This is also the time of year when some pretty important folks return home for a visit. Members of Congress will be traveling throughout our area and state, asking for your thoughts on various pieces of legislation being considered in our nation's capital.

One major concern for electric co-ops — energy and climate-change policy — has returned to the front burner. Legislation on this subject was introduced in the U.S. Senate in April, and co-ops across the country are studying it to see what it might mean for your electric bill.

Meanwhile, unelected bureaucrats at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are moving ahead with efforts to regulate emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases from power plants using the federal Clean Air Act Act — something the law was never designed to do. One of the main authors of the Clean Air Act, U.S. Rep. John Dingell (D-Mich.), has warned that applying the measure to establish federal oversight of carbon dioxide, which goes against the original intent of Congress, will result in a "glorious mess."

It's too early to know for certain if Congress will take up this issue — very few legislative days are still scheduled for this session. But know this: Those of us at Gibson Electric Membership Corporation, along with more than 900 electric co-ops across the country,



Dan Rodamaker,
Gibson EMC
President and CEO

are reminding lawmakers that whatever they do, we will judge their action or inaction on whether your electric bills remain affordable.

The bottom line is that any decision made by Congress — even the decision of taking no action and allowing EPA to proceed on its regulatory path — will have some impact on your electric bills. And this impact comes on top of other pressures — increased fuel and material costs and higher demand for electricity, to name a few — that are forcing electric bills higher. Rest assured that Gibson EMC's leadership — trustees and staff — are doing what we can to keep these cost increases constrained.

But we need your help. During the congressional break this summer, I urge you to talk to your U.S. representative and senators about your electric bill. Make sure they understand what higher bills will do to your family's budget. Every penny counts, especially at a time when our economy has been hit so hard.

More than 526,000 folks across rural America have already let their members of Congress know where they stand on energy and climate-change legislation through the Our Energy, Our Future grassroots campaign. These voices have formed a powerful chorus on the need for keeping electric bills affordable as debate on the issue unfolds.

If you haven't done so, please consider adding your voice to this national dialogue at www.ourenergy.coop.





Washington Youth Tour 2010

Each year, Gibson Electric Membership Corporation sponsors the Washington Youth Tour Short-Story Contest and sends a group of high school juniors to Washington, D.C.

The delegates get the chance to see how our political system works, visit historic monuments and museums and meet with their congressional representatives. Along the way, they learn about the rural electrification program and why it's still an important part of their lives back home.

"The trip gives the contest winners an opportunity to learn more about rural electric cooperatives and our nation's capital," says Gibson EMC Communications Specialist Jenni Lynn Crossnoe, who was a trip chaperone. "It is important that our youth understand that Gibson EMC is a customer-owned, not-for-profit business that exists to serve our customer-owners."

Gibson EMC's short-story winners awarded the trip were Micah Lanier, Lake County High School; Mary Medling, Dyer County High School; Diana Whitmore, Obion County High School; Shanna Laman, Crockett County High School; and Beau Jackson, Peabody High School.

"This trip turned out to be the most amazing experience of my life," said Laman. "The Washington Youth Tour gave me the opportunity to see our capital, have life-changing experiences, make unforgettable memories and make many new friends."



On the cover

Gibson EMC contest winners visit the United States Capitol during the Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in June. From left: Gibson EMC Communications Specialist Jenni Lynn Crossnoe, Diana Whitmore, Mary Medling, Beau Jackson, Micah Lanier, Shanna Laman and Obion County English teacher Jean Little.



Standing in front of the National Cathedral, Gibson EMC Youth Tour participants are, from left, Gibson EMC Communications Specialist Jenni Lynn Crossnoe and students Micah Lanier, Shanna Laman, Beau Jackson, Diana Whitmore and Mary Medling.

Gibson EMC hires new Customer Field Representatives

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation is pleased to announce that James Hutchison and Russell Coker have joined us as our new Customer Field Representatives.

■ Hutchison, who reports to our Troy Customer Service Center, grew up in Troy and graduated from Obion County Central High School. Before coming to work at Gibson EMC, he worked three years for Caterpillar.

"I'm excited that I have the opportunity to help serve our customer-owners, and I am proud to work for a cooperative that gives so much back to its communities," Hutchison says.

James and his wife, Teresa, have three children: Kelsey, 20; Leah, 16; and Carson, 10.



James Hutchison

■ Coker, who reports to our Trenton Customer Service Center, grew up in Humboldt and graduated from Humboldt High School. Before coming to work at Gibson EMC, he worked 17 years for Maytag.

"I am very happy to be at Gibson EMC, and I am looking forward to assisting our customer-owners with their energy needs," Coker says.

Russell and his wife, Sherri, have three children: Shannon, 17; Anna, 11; and Cole, 9.

"We know that James and Russell will be assets to our cooperative, and we welcome them both to our Gibson EMC family," President and CEO Dan Rodamaker says.



Russell Coker



Donny Thomas, above left, replaces a jumper in the OCR Jumper Change-Out event, and Greg Bryant, above right, performs pole-top rescue of a simulated injured lineworker in the Hurtman Rescue event.

Rodeos put safety on the line

Gibson EMC lineworkers compete with safety and skill

A crowd gathers, eyes raised to the sky. A man, equipped with hook-like additions to his boots, races up a towering utility pole. His hooks dig into the wood, one side, then another, pulling his weight ever upward as he stretches himself to reach the top.

Waiting for him, a figure — a heavy mannequin actually — hangs limp below the pole's crossarm. The climber reaches the "body" and moves quickly, cutting cords binding the theoretically injured lineworker to the pole, then gently but quickly lowers the "body" to the ground. Next, the rescuer descends the pole and simulates CPR.

"Time!" calls a hawk-eyed judge. A lineworker in a nearby bucket truck lifts the mannequin to the top of the utility pole again so another would-be rescuer can race to the top. The contest, called the Hurtman Rescue, takes about two minutes. When a co-worker's life is on the line, lineworkers know every second counts.

Unfortunately, mistakes are amplified when working with electricity. A small slip can lead to a flash burn or violent shock — or even death. Rodeos were created to keep lineworkers' skills sharp.

Across the nation, lineworkers from electric utilities compete in a series of tests that balance skill with safety. Those who participate train for months, often on their own time. Many electric co-op chief executives credit rodeos for keeping lineworkers on their toes in what can be a dangerous profession.

"Our line crews are among the best-trained, most-dedicated and hardest-working people you will ever meet," says Gibson Electric Membership Corporation Vice President of Operations Barry Smith. "They must work around high-voltage power lines in the toughest weather conditions and often in the dark to restore power to their neighbors' homes and businesses. The lineworker rodeo gives them the chance to pit their skills against their peers."

Rodeo competitions typically take place atop 40-foot-tall utility poles. For safety reasons, electricity is not running through the lines, but competitors are judged as if every aspect is real. Lineworkers perform a variety of tasks scored by a team of judges.

Attention to detail remains key. Each participant is judged not only on the

Continued on next page ...



Eddie Bell, above, ties in a phase conductor to an insulator in the B1 Tie-In event, and Jeff Milam, below, ties in a neutral conductor to an insulator in the same event.



Take control of your electric use with PAY-Go

Gibson Electric Membership Corporation's Pay-As-You-Go program (PAY-Go) is an ideal choice for customer-owners who want to take control of their energy use. PAY-Go is a pay-before-consumption program that is an alternative to traditional monthly billing.

Here are some answers to the questions most people have about PAY-Go ...



Marlyn and Herman Youmans check their electric consumption on their PAY-Go display.

■ **Is the cost of electricity the same with PAY-Go?**

Yes, the rates are exactly the same as with traditional billing.

■ **When do I pay for my electricity?**

PAY-Go allows you to pay for your electricity whenever you want. It works like most other purchases you make — like buying gas for your car. You buy the gas before you use it, and you buy more gas before you run out.

■ **How much do I pay?**

Gibson EMC encourages customer-owners to purchase at least \$40 of electricity at a time. Just remember that as you use electricity, your credit balance decreases. With PAY-Go, you can pay when you want as many times a month as you want.

■ **How can I keep track of my PAY-Go balance?**

PAY-Go participants may opt for an in-home display (IHD) with a \$50 deposit. The IHD plugs into any wall outlet and shows the amount of money left on the account. It also displays the amount of electricity used the previous day and the amount used during the current billing period. In addition, the display shows the daily average used. If participants prefer, they can forego the display deposit and receive account balance information through a daily e-mail.

■ **What happens if my PAY-Go account reaches a negative balance?**

Your electricity will be automatically disconnected until you purchase more electricity. Normal reconnect fees apply.

■ **How do I get signed up?**

It's as simple as calling or stopping by your local Gibson EMC customer service center. Call or come by today.

Rodeo puts safety on the line

Continued from previous page ...

time it takes to perform an event, but, more importantly, on the safe and efficient methods with which the task is accomplished.

Gibson EMC employees represented the cooperative extremely well in the 13th Annual Tennessee Valley Lineworker Rodeo June 18-19 in Murfreesboro. Line Crewleaders Eddie Bell and Greg Bryant competed against seven others in the Senior Lineworker events (over 45 years of age). Bell was awarded third place in the Seniors Hurtman Rescue, and Bryant earned third in the Seniors B1 Tie-In, second in the Seniors OCR Bypass and third in the Seniors Overall.

Line Crewleader Greg Bryant and First Class Lineworkers Jeff Milam and Donny Thomas competed against 22 others in the Individual Lineworker events. Milam and Thomas excelled in the safety and skills portion of their events. Each earned perfect scores but narrowly missed awards as others finished just seconds quicker. Milam finished fourth and Thomas sixth in the Individual Lineworker Overall standings.

Smith, J.J. Whitwell and Jeff Boyd served as judges. Smith also serves on the Rodeo's board of directors.



2010 Gibson EMC Rodeo participants, from left, are Jeff Boyd, J.J. Whitwell, Donny Thomas, Barry Smith, Jeff Milam, Eddie Bell and Greg Bryant.



Energy Efficiency

Tip of the Month

Consider using ceiling and other fans during the cooling season. They provide additional cooling and better circulation so you can raise the thermostat and cut down on air-conditioning costs. Energy Star-certified ceiling fans do even better, especially those that include compact fluorescent lightbulbs.

Source: Alliance to Save Energy