

Roanoke Electric FLASHES

INSIDE

REC Annual Meeting notice 22 Roanoke EC new building update 24
GALA celebrates community 23

Serving 14,400 Members

"Owned by those we serve"

Act now, and you can help influence future energy rates by letting your voice be heard

By Curtis Wynn

Executive Vice President and CEO

Dear Members:

"Our energy, Our future"—That was the resounding message of North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives in an article published in the June edition of Carolina Country; and in light of rising fuel costs and an existing legislative proposal that threatens to increase member electric bills a crippling 40% over the next 20 years, the time has never been more critical for involvement.

That is just one of the reasons why electric co-ops like Roanoke Electric are engaging in dialogue with their elected officials to produce policies that will ensure a viable future for its members. In a recent legislative discussion at the nation's capital, REC, along with co-ops across the nation, spoke with state and federal officials to

express their concerns about the worsening fuel crisis and pending climate change legislation.

What many people do not understand is that the cost of fuel is not just a problem that exists for the consumer. While it is the co-op's mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to its members with an eye toward enhancing the quality of life for the diverse communities it serves, there are some things over which co-ops have no control. Among those things are the cost of fuel to the supplier and the amount of rainfall, both of which directly impact the cost of electricity to the consumer. Add these factors to intensifying efforts to address the looming threats of climate change and you have a daunting challenge.

As a result, electric co-ops have been forced to take proactive measures to mitigate the obstacles associated with energy compliance and have begun to engage policy makers at state and federal levels to ensure that the voices of the cooperatives and its members are heard.

According to the Carolina Country article

in June, experts project that "our nation's growing electricity needs will soon go well beyond what renewable, conservation and efficiency can provide." The question begs then, what will we do to make sure we have the electricity we need for the future? This is one of the questions cooperative officials had an opportunity to ask during the legislative discussion in D.C.

Co-ops have to walk a tight line between environmental responsibility and the responsibility we have to our consumer-members to maintain service quality and affordability. One of the ways the cooperative had been able to keep the cost of energy at a reasonable level in the past was its use of hydro power. Power generated by dams supply approximately 20% of the energy co-ops use to provide their members with electricity. Sadly, due to the recent drought conditions, however, they have been forced to turn to other, more



Curtis Wynn



Our Energy, Our Future
A Dialogue With America

...continued on page 22

Act now for your energy future (continued from page 21....)

expensive sources to keep up with increasing electricity demand. That translates into higher costs for fuel for the consumer.

Consequently, renewable energy, conservation and efficiency alone



Millard "Mickey" C. Lee, Roanoke Electric board member from District 6 (right), speaks with U.S. House of Representatives Congressman G.K. Butterfield of North Carolina's District 1 during a recent legislative discussion at the nation's capital concerning climate change policy.

are not enough to offset the supply-demand problem and the impact is already being felt in the form of fuel adjustments and higher electric bills across the nation. One of the things that happen when we are forced to pay a higher price for fuel is that we have to pass on those excessive fuel costs to the consumer." Further, if the legislative proposal currently under consideration in Congress passes, consumers will face the possibility of a 40% rate increase over the next 20 years. Which is why it is so important for everyone to get involved.

I encourage all members to contact their representatives and begin a dialogue with them by asking them three key questions:

1. What is your plan to make sure we have the electricity we'll need in the future?

2. What are you doing to make sure research is fully funded for implementing emissions free, affordable electric plants?

3. How much is it going to increase my electric bill to balance electricity needs and environmental goals and what are you going to do to make it more affordable?

As we seek to be environmentally responsible, we will no doubt be required to maintain compliance with progressive standards dictated by climate change. While your cooperative will continue to fight for policies that protect its mission to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity to its members, this task cannot be tackled alone. Ultimately it's "Our energy, Our future."

To dialogue with your representatives, visit www.ourenergy.coop.

Annual meeting bylaws information & REC's Annual Meeting & Member Appreciation Day on August 23

Roanoke Electric will host its Annual Meeting and Member Appreciation Day on Saturday, August 23.

At the meeting, the three-year term for directors serving districts 2, 6, and 8 will be up for election. Presently serving these districts are: Delores H. Amason, Millard (Mickey) C. Lee, and Allen W. Speller, respectively.

The cooperative's Bylaws require that a director must: (1) Be a member of the cooperative receiving service therefrom from his/her primary residential abode (2) He/she must be a member in good standing and cannot be a close relative of an incumbent board member or an employee of the Cooperative (3) He/she must be 18 years of age not employed by or

have any financial interest in a competing enterprise, or an enterprise that does business with the cooperative or sells electrical or plumbing supplies, appliances, fixtures and wiring primarily to cooperative members.

The Bylaws establish two methods for nominating board members: (1) By Nominating Committee or (2) By signature petition of 15 or more members at least 35 days before the Annual Meeting.

The 2008 Nominating Committee consists of: Robert G. Clark (Dist. 1), Kathy W. Knight (Dist. 2), Kenneth A. Purnell (Dist. 3), J. Lewis Storey (Dist. 4), Reba



Roanoke EC Annual Meeting of Members is August 23.

Green-Holley (Dist. 5), Sonya Trotman (Dist. 6), James T. Heckstall (Dist. 7), Irving Coggins (Dist. 8) and Venus Michelle Spruill (Dist. 9). The Nominating Committee meeting is scheduled for 2 p.m. on July 16.

For further information, please contact Roanoke Electric Cooperative at (252) 539-2236.

Communities in Schools of the Northeast, United Faith Coalition host Gala Awards banquet

Communities In Schools of the Northeast (CISNE) and the United Faith Coalition (UFC) held their second annual Gala awards banquet on Saturday, April 12, at Nebo Family Life Center in Murfreesboro to raise funds to help kids stay in school and prepare for life.

CISNE is in its fourth year of operation as a non-profit, working with schools, agencies and organizations to connect community resources and affect a greater future for area youth.

CISNE's Gala event featured Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, president of Halifax Community College, and Bryant Brooks, senior manager of State and Local Affairs at Dominion/North Carolina Power, as keynote speakers. Rev. Quientrell Burrell, Jr. of First Baptist Church in Weldon acted as Master of Ceremony at the event, which boasted appearances from Senator Ed Jones (4th District – N.C. Senate) and Annie W. Mobley (5th District). The event solicited performances by the Color Guard at Northampton County High School East and the KIPP Pride Jazz band from Gaston Preparatory College. For a second consecutive year Dominion/North Carolina Power and Roanoke EC shared the honor of providing corporate platinum sponsorship of the Gala, which included a live auction of donated items from various supporters. State and county agencies, local government and school officials, and non-profit and community outreach groups also came out in support of the celebration.

“Every year the support is greater and greater,” said CISNE Executive Director Diana Mitchell. “It just goes to show the truth revealed in the old adage, ‘working together works.’ This celebration is a wonderful opportunity to thank our partners, businesses, educators, and volunteers for all they bring to our youth and the community.”

This year's winners of the 2008 CISNE Gala Awards were as follows:



Dr. Ervin V. Griffin, president of Halifax Community College (left), and Bryant Brooks, senior manager of State and Local Affairs for Dominion/North Carolina Power, were keynote speakers at the second annual CISNE Gala.

Organizational Awards

- **Children, Youth and Families Award:** presented to Daniel and Laura Dickerson, organizers of the movement “Citizens Against OLF” (Outlying Landing Field). The Dickersons have taken on the leadership roles of organizing meetings and have worked tirelessly to inform people about the effects of the landing field on the county and surrounding counties.
- **Health & Wellness Community Outreach Award:** presented to Gates County 4-H for its SOS (Support Our Students) middle school after-school program, which encouraged youth to adopt positive behaviors that contribute to their overall health and well being through healthy physical and emotional weight and basic safety. The program dedicated one day each week to the enrichment of Healthy Lifestyles.
- **Faith-based Award:** presented to the Bread and Food Ministry, which for the past four years has worked together with Ballard's Grove Baptist Church, New Hope Baptist Church, and Lebanon Grove Baptist Church to provide sustenance to many individuals in Gates County.
- **Business & Industry Award of Philanthropy:** presented to Hertford County, which with assistance from FEMA and MDC of Chapel Hill, formed an Emergency Preparedness Team to evaluate the county's strengths and weaknesses in responding to disasters and emergencies, and to brainstorm various strategies for addressing problems. Volunteers met regularly, worked diligently and arrived at ways the communities can be made safer, stronger, and better prepared for responding to emergency situations.

- **Technology Innovation & Education Award:** presented to e-NC Authority, a grassroots initiative linking all North Carolinians, especially those in rural areas, to the Internet. e-NC Authority has been successful in providing local dial-up internet access from every telephone exchange in the state, providing high-speed internet access at competitive prices, and increasing the number of individuals, businesses and organizations who own computers and computer devices and who subscribe to Internet service.

Individual Awards

- **Young Bright Star Award (Ages 12-18):** presented to Trey Taylor for his outstanding character, poise and volunteerism, his numerous leadership roles and his many hours of volunteer work at 4-H workshops and other community projects.
- **Shining Star Award (Ages 19-59):** presented to Selwynn Thomas, who promotes literacy and character building and also worked as the supervising tutor for the Weldon City Schools 21st Century program in 2006. He assisted students with homework, helped build their self-esteem, and even made home visits.
- **Silver Star Award (Ages 60 and up):** presented to Ms. Larree Cherry of Bertie County. Cherry is a teacher and advocate of children with special needs and has been an active volunteer in Bertie County with the 4-H program since the early 1980s. Cherry works diligently with the faith community in Bertie and Hertford Counties and with children who are visually impaired, learning disabled, and educationally mentally handicapped for the Northampton County Public School System.

Roanoke Electric awards bid for new Ahoskie facility

Inside the dark cloud of a struggling economy, Roanoke Electric Cooperative has found a silver lining that is sure to make its members smile. REC members already know cooperative leadership's mission is to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity while continuing to enhance the quality of life in the diverse communities it serves. Now members have another reason to rejoice. Not only will they will have a facility that will accommodate their changing needs, they can rest assured their leadership got the best deal it could to make it happen.

After much research and deliberation, REC has awarded the contract for erecting its new facility in Ahoskie to A. R. Chesson Construction Company, which means the work on the 17-acre site will soon begin. "A. R. Chesson has a solid track record in managing projects of this magnitude," said REC's Executive Vice President and CEO Curtis Wynn. "Their proposal clearly demonstrated the best value and ability to complete the project in a timely manner and within budget. With the economy the way it is, it is critical to make sure every dollar counts, which is what our members expect of us. We also like the fact that they're based out of eastern North Carolina and seeking opportunities to work with some of our local contractors to complete the project."

Al Chesson, President of A.R. Chesson Construction Company, Inc., was recently awarded

the contract to construct the Ahoskie headquarters and maintains five offices in eastern North Carolina. Said Chesson: "The timing for the construction of Roanoke's new facility could not have been better."

A full-service construction firm in business since 1981, A.R. Chesson Construction Company, Inc. has performed work for churches, educational, retail, medical, industrial, residential and governmental facilities and has to its credit buildings/renovations such as the Halifax Electric Membership Corp. in Enfield, PCB Piezontronics in Roanoke Rapids, and a host of others.

"Two years ago, suppliers and subcontractors were inundated with work and minimal competition," said Chesson, "but the recent economic downturn has forced these suppliers and subs to become much more aggressive and lower their profit margins."

Consequently, Chesson said suppliers and subcontractors are providing extremely competitive rates, allowing the contractor's savings to be passed along to clients like REC. "From a cost perspective, REC's decision to construct a new facility is strategic and timely," Chesson said. "When businesses and individuals take advantage of the benefits that exist in a challenged economy such as this, they turn what may have been an obstacle into an opportunity for growth that works towards their advantage. That is exactly what Roanoke has done."

In addition to providing a more feasible facility for its members, REC's relocation to Ahoskie will allow its subsidiaries to expand its outreach and services to the community. The Roanoke Center, which focuses on developing the regional economy, promoting economic growth and cultivating a regional commitment to reinvestment in the community, will provide a number of advantages and opportunities for the cooperative including the continued operation of the facility as a payment collection center for REC members who wish to continue making payments at the present location and more available tenant space.

"There are a lot of great things happening here," said Diana Mitchell, Director of The Roanoke Center. "We have already expanded our public access computer lab and are working out the details of welcoming Generations Credit Union to ensure our citizens have access to all the elements they need to operate their businesses and their personal lives more effectively," said Mitchell. Additionally, the new Ahoskie headquarters will provide more room for the subsidiaries to expand outreach.

As for the new headquarters, citizens will see some activity very soon. Chesson estimates that REC staff and employees will be able to move into the new facility some time mid- September 2009.

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