



Roanoke Electric **FLASHES**

Roanoke Connect: Building the Bridge to Energy Savings



Curtis Wynn

At Roanoke Electric Cooperative, most of our daily operations are geared toward ensuring that the power flows consistently, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



To that end, we've made great strides to enhance system reliability through our strategic initiative, called Roanoke Connect.

During the past two years, your co-op has invested \$4 million in the construction of a fiber optic network. This broadband technology offers us the capability of better predicting system outages, as well as the ability to reduce the frequency and duration of outages.

With this advanced technology, status updates on recovery and restoration efforts will become more readily available. Ultimately, this means that you will experience outages less often and even when they do occur, power will be restored a lot faster.

Another anticipated benefit of Roanoke Connect is that it will equip our member-owners with the ability

to better manage their energy consumption and thus, save money. With the construction of the fiber optic network nearly complete, the second phase of the Roanoke Connect initiative seeks to help bring broadband access to the region.

Under this plan, member-owners will have the opportunity to subscribe to high-speed internet services at their homes and businesses. This, in turn, will allow them the opportunity to better utilize some of the co-op's products and services:

Ecobee3 Thermostat: Member-owners can purchase this Wi-Fi enabled device to better manage their energy usage and costs—potentially saving them both energy and money. Installation is free. Find out more about our ecobee3 thermostat program at roanokeelectric.com/thermostat.

Paperless billing: Get your electric bill on the go when you sign up for electronic billing. When you enroll, you'll receive an email reminder when your bill is ready to view and pay online. You'll also receive a \$5 credit on your electric bill. To enroll, call 252-209-2236 or visit roanokeelectric.com/ebill.

Roanoke Rewards: Do you shop online often? This program allows you to shop online and earn credit toward your electric bill. Earn up to 40 percent cash back from more than 6,000 participating online retailers. Visit roanokeelectric.com/rewards to start today.

For more information on our efforts to bring you better service, visit roanokeelectric.com.

QUESTIONS?

Submit your questions to our blog and we'll answer you directly!
Simply visit roanokeelectric.com/response today.

A legacy worth preserving

Roseva Gilliam holds dear the sign that Roanoke Electric presented to her family, along with a clock, more than a half century ago. They stand as a simple but bold testament to a fond memory she also cherishes to this day—one that marked the dawn of a new era for the co-op and her family.

In the 1950s, Gilliam's childhood home became one of the first all-electric farm homes in this region. She was in the sixth grade when the co-op's line crew came out to wire her family's two-story, 12-room home that she shared with her eight siblings.

Following the installation, Gilliam recalls that she didn't realize how much of a difference electricity made in their lives. However, she's thankful for the service the co-op currently provides, especially knowing the history of how and when it all began. "It means a lot to say that the tradition is still going."

Gilliam currently lives in Windsor on her family's land. To preserve her mother's legacy, Gilliam has not only kept her mother's home telephone number the same, but she has



Above: Roseva Gilliam with the sign that the co-op presented to her family back in the 1950s. The inset photograph shows her with her mother, Betty Bazemore.

also kept the sign and clock that the co-op presented to her mother, in recognition of the historic moment power was delivered to their home for the first time.

"Through storms and outages, my mother's clock has managed to keep on ticking," she said. "Even after all of these years."

Gilliam's mother was a proud member-owner of this co-op until her death in 1991. "It means so much to me to know that I've come up under the same electric cooperative as my mother and to not have any problems," she added. "Knowing that the co-op is still in existence and still has the qualities it had back then means a lot to me."

Time to Celebrate: National Lineman Appreciation Day

Every year, we take the time to thank our extraordinary lineworkers who dedicate their lives to keeping the lights on in our local communities. Roanoke Electric Cooperative has 14 lineworkers who maintain more than 2,000 miles of line in our service territory.

While we depend on our entire staff to keep your co-op running smoothly, we pay special homage to our lineworkers on National Lineman Appreciation Day, Monday, April 10. These brave men and women repair damaged lines and maintain critical infrastructure for our communities, often under challenging and dan-

gerous circumstances.

"Lineworkers are first responders. They're out in all kinds of inclement weather and at all hours," said president and CEO Curtis Wynn. "We depend on them to be the front line."

Our lineworkers are brave, committed and critical to our success. This year, we celebrate them for their continued selfless commitment to our cooperative and community.

We hope you will join us in thanking the many lineworkers—both locally and around the world—who help bring the gift of light to our lives. Remember, your power works because they do!

Use [#ThankALineman](#) on social media to show your support.



Roanoke Electric employee Jamie Elliott captured this photo of co-op lineworkers on the job.

Educators: Apply to fund your Bright Ideas!

It's been said that April showers bring May flowers. But did you know April also brings new opportunities for local educators to fund innovative classroom projects?

This month marks the official kickoff of the Bright Ideas Education Grant Program, and Roanoke Electric Cooperative is currently accepting applications for the 2017-18 school year.

Educators in K-12 classrooms with creative ideas for hands-on learning projects are encouraged to apply for a grant up to \$2,000. Last year, your cooperative awarded a total of \$8,000 for seven projects supporting local teachers and students.

The program is offered by all 26 of North Carolina's electric cooperatives and supports educators in need of funding to implement creative, hands-on learning projects.

Since 1994, North Carolina's electric co-ops have awarded more than \$10.9 million in Bright Ideas grants to teachers statewide. More than 10,400 classroom projects benefiting well over 2.1 million North Carolina students have been made possible because of these grants.

Grant applications will be accepted Saturday, April 1, through Sept. 18. Teachers who submit their applications by the early bird deadline of Aug. 15 will be entered a drawing for one of five \$100 Visa gift cards.



Gregory Watford receives the Bright Ideas Award from Brittany Tann, Roanoke Electric's communications specialist

Tar Heel Teacher of the Week

Each year, Roanoke Electric Co-op recognizes a Bright Ideas grant recipient for an innovative project idea. Last year, the "Tar Heel Teacher of the Week" designation was presented to Greg Watford of Hertford County High School for his "I Spy Raspberry Pi: Building Computers and Creating Digital Stories from Scratch" project.

Teachers at qualifying schools can apply individually or as a team, and grants are available for all subjects. To apply, or for more information about the Bright Ideas grant program, visit NCBrightIdeas.com.

The LED light at the end of the tunnel

In 2015, Roanoke Electric Co-op began converting all residential outdoor lighting to energy-efficient LEDs, as part of a strategic initiative called Bright Savings. While the deployment effort ended last November, the much-anticipated energy savings continue to add up.

After the new lighting was installed, member-owners realized a \$2.10 monthly reduction in their electric bill. On a larger scale, the co-op is now able to save about \$19,000 per month in its overall energy costs, for an average estimate of \$230,000 in annual savings.

"We would like to thank you for your patience and cooperation

during this 18-month process," said co-op president and CEO Curtis Wynn. "Although the project is considered complete, we look forward to member-owners continuing to reap its benefits."

For more information about Bright Savings and all our other initiatives, visit roanokeelectric.com/TheCall.

"We would like to thank you for your patience and cooperation ... we look forward to member-owners continuing to reap its benefits."

Savings adds up with Upgrade to \$ave

Since the Upgrade to \$ave program was launched two years ago, Roanoke Electric Co-op has helped more than 200 member-owners make energy-efficient upgrades to their homes.

These upgrades came in response to calls from families trying to cope with high energy costs, typically the result of high energy consumption and/or the low level of energy efficiency in the home. So, while some homeowners may have made great efforts to reduce energy consumption, they were offset by inadvertent energy loss in the home.

With Upgrade to \$ave, member-owners can finance cost-effective, energy-efficient home improvements. A certified energy advisor will assess your home's efficiency by performing an energy audit. From there, you will be notified of energy efficiency measures that can be performed in your home through the program.

On average,
program
participants are
saving more than
\$20 per month.

Member-owners can finance cost-effective energy efficient home improvements, regardless of their income status or credit scores. A certified energy advisor will assess their home's efficiency by performing an energy audit. From there, homeowners will be notified of energy efficiency measures that can be performed in your home through the program.



With Upgrade to \$ave, member-owners can finance cost-effective, energy-efficient home improvements.

Is there an upfront investment to participate?

No. The co-op will make that investment for you. This way, member-owners will be able to save money on their bills without making any upfront payments or incurring a new debt obligation. Participants simply agree to pay a voluntary tariff for upgrades that produce savings on their electric bill. This tariff will ensure immediate savings for program participants and full cost recovery for the co-op.

What upgrades can I receive through this program?

- Insulation
- Duct sealing
- Air sealing
- Heat pump upgrades
- Water heater wraps
- LED lighting

Upgrade to \$ave Member-Owner Testimonial



"I didn't have an efficient heating unit, and there was plenty of air leakage in my home. This made my bill very high during the winter. They replaced my heating unit, wrapped my hot water heater and installed new bathtub fixtures. I was very satisfied with the results."

— Benjamin Williams

Want to join Mr. Williams and other member-owners who are benefiting from these upgrades? Call the co-op's Care Center at 252-209-2236 or visit roanokeelectric.com/UpgradeToSave to apply.

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