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Mission Statement
Blue Ridge will be a competitive, quality provider of energy and other services, maintaining its history of integrity and adapting to the challenges of a changing world. While exercising leadership in the community, the organization's focus will be on exceeding customer expectations.

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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Two Blue Ridge Fest milestones

THE UPWARDS OF 5,000 folks who made their way to our May 8 Blue Ridge Fest charity fund-raiser were subjected to a memorable evening of entertainment. Three fine musical acts—The Swingin’ Medallions, Shirley Alston Reeves and the Shirelles tribute, and Johnny Tillotson—reveled the audience with renderings of so many wonderful songs.



There was plenty more enjoyment associated with this year's fest, and I'll cover that before I end my report. What I don't want to wait any longer to share is that this edition of Blue Ridge Fest set a new record in terms of net proceeds. When all the accounting was complete, we learned the event had cleared \$185,000. That was a full \$2,000 greater than the 2013 total that represented the previous record. As I'm preparing this column, preparations are under way to disburse those proceeds among the 12 local human-assistance agencies to be funded this year.

The \$185,000 is just part of the story. Blue Ridge Fest 2015 reached another milestone: the cumulative sum for the 18-year history of the fund-raiser surpassed the \$2-million mark. That's right! Since 1998, the undertaking has generated \$2,069,000 to assist local families and individuals in need of a hand up. From my vantage point 18 years ago, I'd have never envisioned the fest coming anywhere close to this far, this fast.

Although the stage show was the centerpiece of the Friday night production, there were other ingredients that helped to attract a big crowd. Not the least of these was the Upstate's largest cruise-in that brought 455 classic cars onto the festival grounds. "Classic" is an appropriate word to describe this auto rally, because it featured some of the finest-looking vintage vehicles I've ever seen.

Blue Ridge Fest also offered a wide variety of great food choices. Improvements to the venue included new, spacious



DENISE MCCORMICK

concession areas and ample permanent restroom facilities. In addition, two massive video screens were placements on either side of the stage, which afforded attendees up-close views of the performers.

Now, to give credit where credit is due for the success of this charitable endeavor, I first have to cite the 100-plus sponsors who stepped forward with monetary or in-kind donations. The level of support is truly remarkable and deeply appreciated. My sincere thanks also go out to the thousands of members of the public who purchased admission and/or raffle tickets and/or bought fest T-shirts and food the night of the event.

Finally, I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to our employees, those from both the cooperative and Blue Ridge Security Solutions. They, along with family members and others from the community, volunteered their time and labor to produce Blue Ridge Fest. Their contributions helped to hold down the cost of the fest, and that freed up more dollars to flow to the funded benevolent organizations. We're blessed to have an employee team that's dedicated to serving our members and customers well, while also giving of themselves on behalf of the community.

Charles E. Dalton
President and CEO

Join us for cake and memories

WHILE MANY OF you celebrated our 75th anniversary with us at the Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting on April 30, we have planned one more special event on our actual anniversary date, August 14. On that date, we will be 75 years old, and what better way to celebrate the day than with a delicious birthday cake. Beginning at 1 p.m., our offices in Pickens, Oconee and Anderson will be serving cake and punch to those who drop by for a visit.

There will also be copies of the



75th Anniversary video available. This 11-minute video tells not only the history of our co-op, but also the impact that the Rural Electrification Act had on the development and economy of our state and our local counties. The story is told through historical documents, photos and drama along with interviews from people who lived during that time.

We hope you'll join us on Friday, August 14, from 1-5 p.m. for cake and memories!



Co-op members are saving millions!

THIS MONTH OUR members have surpassed \$3,000,000 in prescription savings by using the Co-op Connections® Card. This is just another benefit of being a Blue Ridge member, and best of all, the Co-op Connections Card is free for you to use.

With your card, you can get discounts from businesses in our community including dining, shopping, automotive and much more. Additional benefits include 10-85 percent off prescriptions at more than 60,000 participating pharmacies including CVS, Walgreens, Walmart, Target and many more. Local independent pharmacies include Moon's Drug Store, Propp Drugs, and Corner Drug Store among many others.

To locate providers in your area, you can:

- ▶ Call 800-800-7616.
- ▶ Look on the back of your card, find the group and member numbers and use them to log onto locateproviders.com. Next, enter your ZIP code to search for nearby pharmacies.

Don't forget to visit rxpricequotes.com to find the best deal in town for your particular medication.

As a Touchstone Energy® cooperative, we are always "Looking out for you." For more information and to start saving visit blueridge.coop and click on the Co-op Connections link. If you have any questions or would like us to mail you a card, please contact us at (800) 240-3400.

Stay safe exploring the great outdoors this summer

BY ABBY BERRY

SUMMER IS IN full swing, and that means it is time for fun in the sun! As you find yourself spending more time outdoors, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative reminds you to stay safe.

Planning a home-improvement project? Pay attention to where you place metal ladders or dig for fence posts. Before you start any project, always look up and avoid overhead power lines. Keep a minimum of 10 feet between you and overhead lines.

If you are planning a project that requires digging, remember to dial 811 first to find out if the area you will be working in is clear of underground power lines. Power tools should be kept away from wet surfaces, and outlets should not be overloaded.



AMY CHILDRESS

More and more families are adding pools to their backyard to combat the hot summers. Have fun but be safe, especially when those afternoon thunderstorms roll in.

Exploring the great outdoors is a great way to spend time with the family, but keep these safety tips in mind.

Children should never climb trees near power lines—always assume a wire is live. Fly kites and remote-controlled airplanes in large, open areas like a park or a field, safely away from trees and overhead power lines.

Planning to take a dip in the pool? Electrical devices, such as stereos, should be kept at least 10 feet away from water sources, and outdoor electrical outlets should always be covered. If you hear a rumble of thunder, exit the pool right away.

Speaking of thunder, summer storms can be dangerous if you're caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. If you find yourself outdoors during a storm, move toward suitable shelter with covered sides, and stick to low-lying ground if possible.

These are just a few tips to remember when you are spending time outdoors this summer with your family. Have some fun out there, and always keep safety in mind!