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MISSION STATEMENT

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative will operate as a competitive provider of energy services and a partner with local communities, with a focus on safety, service and integrity.

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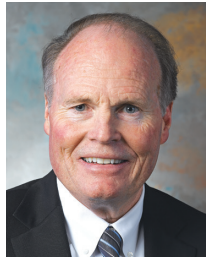
Jim Lovinggood

This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Right-of-way easements: neighbor helping neighbor



HERE IN UPSTATE South Carolina, electric distribution lines hadn't been extended into rural areas to any extent until the mid-1930s. How we got from there to where Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative is today entails quite a story.

According to the latest statistics at my disposal, Blue Ridge has about 7,100 miles of installed power lines serving more than 66,000 members. As you might imagine, those 120,000 or so poles and the associated wires, crossarms, and other hardware constitute a huge investment. This vast infrastructure network also represents untold hours of work performed by multitudes of line-construction crews down through the years.

A history built around cooperation

However, the praiseworthy labors that went into the development of the Blue Ridge system don't paint the entire picture. More than anything else, our history is built around cooperation. It goes without saying that cooperation would be foundational to any cooperative-type organization.

In that spirit of cooperation, co-op members are sometimes called upon to defer to the needs of their fellow members. As a result, they're also contributing to their utility's overall success. Essentially, it's always been a process of neighbor helping neighbor.

The manner in which this principle most often comes to the surface is in the granting of right-of-way easements. An individual, a business, a church, or some other entity may depend upon the cooperation of nearby property owners. Those folks' permission could be required before a power-line extension

can be built to provide electric service to the prospective new member.

At Blue Ridge, we have some right-of-way easement documents on file that are more than 80 years old. Furthermore, our engineering department employees transport dozens of newly executed easements each month to be recorded at local county courthouses. Oftentimes, these easements were signed by landowners assenting for an electric-line portion to be constructed across their property in order for their neighbor to receive power.

Rare Occasions

On rare occasions, the cooperative has encountered persons who refuse to allow the needed new line section to be erected on their real estate. In those situations, we try to deal with matters as best we can. Alternatives usually compel us to find a different takeoff point for the new facilities that's also a greater distance from the new-service location. That, of course, would involve additional expense—an expense that would ultimately be borne by all Blue Ridge ratepayers.

There's one reality that every cooperative member should keep in mind. Somebody or somebodies had, in the past, consented for a line to be constructed across their lands so that electric service could eventually reach that particular member. If those 7,100 miles of power lines could talk, they could give witness to thousands of instances where neighbor interceded for neighbor in that way.

JIM LOVINGGOOD
 President and CEO

Great times for great causes

CARS, STARS AND good food—what a great combination, allowing Blue Ridge Fest to raise a record amount of funds for charity in its 22nd year. Hosted by employee volunteers, President and CEO, Jim Lovinggood, recently expressed his thanks to the employees, sponsors, and all who attended Blue Ridge Fest. “The reward for you that participated in some way with this event will be borne out in the lives of the many families and individuals who’ll receive vital assistance from the Fest’s monetary proceeds. Those charities charged with administering the funds will accomplish a world of good as they assist many of the less fortunate residing within the co-op’s service area.”

In late June, checks were presented to twelve local charities. Volunteers, charity directors and staff, as well as co-op employees, all participated in this exciting time. Julie-ann Shannon, executive director of Grace’s Closet was honored that her organization was chosen to be a recipient this year. She said, “This generous gift will allow us to provide clothing, new shoes, hygiene items, school supplies, and weekend food



AMY CHILDRESS

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative employee Amanda Machen (far right) presented a check for \$17,000 from the 22nd annual Blue Ridge Fest to Grace’s Closet. Accepting the check on behalf of the organization are (from left) Alicia Keys, Chris Leonard, Julie-Ann Shannon, Danielle Doll, Annette Morrah and Judy Lyle. Since the inception of Blue Ridge Fest, the event has raised nearly \$3 million for Upstate charitable organizations.

to Oconee County students. These items help build self-confidence by meeting the basic needs of our youth. Your support makes this possible! The generosity of Blue Ridge Fest fosters community support across the Upstate. This is a unique opportunity for individuals to come together, have a fun time while improving the lives of many.”

Golden Corner Food Pantry serves more than 1,100 families in Oconee County. Board chair Mike Harlin is thankful for the \$17,000 they received.

For this agency, the need is great. “This donation is just in time to provide most of the funds we need to purchase milk, eggs, whole grain cereal and other nutritious foods to support our Improved Nutrition Program for the balance of this year,” states Mr. Harlin.

Other charities receiving funds this year were: A Child’s Haven, Anderson Free Clinic, Anderson Interfaith Ministries, Cancer Association of Pickens County, The Dream Center, Feed a Hungry Child, Fostering Faithfully, The Lachlan McIntosh Tannery Foundation, North Greenville Crisis Ministry, and Pickens County Meals on Wheels.

Plans are already underway for the 23rd Annual Blue Ridge Fest. We hope to see you next spring for a night of great times for great causes.



DANNY PECK

Blue Ridge Ambassadors take on D.C.

THE WEEK OF June 15–20, three high school students represented Blue Ridge Electric on the annual Washington Youth Tour. These students visited many historic sites, met with several of our elected officials, and made connections that will last a lifetime, all while learning more about our nation, its history and how our government works.

Karrigan Spivey (from left) of Pickens High School, Landon Norizsan of Walhalla High School, and Alex Dow of Pickens High School are pictured in front of the Capitol building in Washington. They joined 1,600 other students for this week-long adventure.