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Highway 123
Westminster, SC 29693

Anderson
1212 North Fant St.
Anderson, SC 29622

Greenville
3751 Highway 11
Travelers Rest, SC 29690

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

Power Saver = tangible rewards for members

AS I SHARED at last month's co-op district meetings in Anderson, Oconee, and Pickens counties, 2016 was a



year of accomplishment and progress for this organization. One of the items I highlighted in my remarks was the tremendous response by Blue Ridge members to our Power Saver Rewards load-management program.

When 2016 came to a close, we had nearly doubled the number of member appliances that had been outfitted with load-control switches. As of Dec. 31, the total devices in place had reached 3,624. That figure had climbed to an even 3,700 by March 1, and included 2,550 central air conditioners and 1,150 electric water heaters.

A most-potent arrow

You might ask yourself why this bit of news would be important to you. Fact is, when it comes to holding down the cost of electricity, Power Saver is one of the most-potent arrows the cooperative has in its quiver.

A key component of the rate applied to Blue Ridge by our wholesale-power supplier is the kilowatt-demand charge. Essentially, the cooperative is billed for every kilowatt of electrical demand that our system registers during the times of highest power use in a given year. These peak periods typically occur between 3 and 8 p.m. in the hot months and between 6 and 9 a.m. during the cold season.

The load-management switch attached to a central-air unit will shut

off the compressor for short time spans on those real-hot days. Since the A/C fan continues to operate, the home's occupants are not likely to notice any difference. A load-control device on a water heater might shut the heating coil off for a longer period. However, the ample volume of gallons stored in the appliance's well-insulated tank will almost inevitably stay hot for the duration.

Three rewarding reasons

We call this a "rewards" program for three reasons. First of all, members who sign up for Power Saver receive a one-time, upfront \$20 bill credit. Secondly, each program participant will also be awarded a monthly \$5 bill credit, June through September, for the A/C switch. For having the water-heater device in operation, the member gets an additional \$2-per-month credit for all 12 months of each year. Residences with switches on multiple air conditioners and/or water heaters are eligible for additional bill credits. Finally, from the standpoint of overall power costs, every Blue Ridge member benefits when we reduce the number of kilowatts recorded during a peak period.

I can assure you, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative is serious about load control. We'd be delighted to add you to our rapidly growing list of Power Saver Rewards subscribers!

Charles E. Dalton
President and CEO

The Dream Center offers hope in Pickens County

LAST YEAR, the Dream Center in Easley was presented a check for \$17,000. This organization, co-founded by Chris and Jim Wilson was formed when a small group of friends began to look for ways to be the church, rather than just go to church. With a mission of building a better community by helping people with the “hand up” instead of a handout, the Dream Center offers free classes that teach budgeting, nutrition, Bible study, parenting, anger management and more. Attending class earns Dream Dollars that can be exchanged for laundry or shower facilities, or used to purchase clothing and household items at the Dream Center Resale Store in Easley. A second resale store will be opening soon in Pickens.

In 2013, the Dream Center purchased a 45,000-square-foot building that it shares with other community groups—Five Point Church Food Bank, Samaritan Dental Clinic and Predestined Teen Outreach.

Underlying all they do is a desire to empower people in need through the love of Jesus Christ. Food, counseling, shelter and prayer are all part of the



offerings at the Dream Center. Chris Wilson is sure of the path they have taken, “We share the love of Jesus with them, because we feel that is their true hope.” If you have items to donate, or would like to volunteer, email cwilson@dreamcenterpc.org or visit their website at dreamcenterpc.org

Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative employees Tony Kelley and Mark McCall (far left) presented The Dream Center of Pickens County a check totaling \$17,000 from the 19th annual Blue Ridge Fest. Accepting on behalf of The Dream Center (pictured left to right) were Michael Barnes, Joey Turner, Ashley Cox, Amanda Taylor, Chris and Jim Wilson, Co-Founders, Aimee White and Shannon Leatherwood.

Blue Ridge Fest supports local charities

FOR TWENTY YEARS Blue Ridge Fest has entertained thousands and hosted hundreds of classic cars for the viewing enjoyment of the crowds in attendance. It is certainly a great night of fun each year; but more importantly, Blue Ridge Fest has raised more than \$2.2 million that has been distributed to charities here in the Upstate. Sixty-seven different organizations have been the recipients of funds raised by Blue Ridge employees.

Charity applications are reviewed by an employee team that carefully evaluates the purpose, goals and services of each organization that applies for Fest funding. Jim Lovinggood, Manager of Engineering, oversees the process. “It’s very difficult to take close to 100 applications from good, caring groups and choose just 12 that will get funding that specific year. We meet a number of times and spend many hours looking at the people that will be served and how they will benefit from this aid. We also want to make sure that folks in the counties we serve are the beneficiaries of Fest funds.”

This year’s list of Fest charities includes Anderson Interfaith Ministries, Collins Children’s Home, Dot’s Kitchen of Westminster, Feed a Hungry Child, Helping Hands of Clemson, Hidden Treasure Christian School, Meals on Wheels Anderson, North Greenville Crisis Ministry, Oconee Disabilities & Special Needs Board, Ripple of One, The Dream Center of Pickens County, and United Christian Ministries. Each one of these is special in the help it provides . . . food, housing, medical care, life skills, services for children, or other basic needs.

Community Solar Farm is on the way

CONSTRUCTION WILL SOON be finished on the Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative Community Solar Farm, and co-op members will reap the benefits of this installation. Manager of Community and Government Relations Zach Hinton, who has been active with the project, announced that all the shares of the solar farm have already been sold prior to the farm's completion. "We're excited that our members have seen the value in this project and have chosen the option of going solar without installing solar panels on their property."

Locating a second site on which to build additional capacity for the cooperative's solar program is already in the works. Hinton noted, "With the success of this 125-kilowatt [kW] farm, we're intent on building additional solar arrays in other locations. For people who are interested in using solar as an alternative energy source, they really should take a look at what we're offering. Community solar means no liability for the member, no maintenance and upkeep, and the subscriptions are transferable."



One member and subscriber to community solar is Jim Winsness, a man who spent his entire career with GE in its Power Generation business. Winsness remarks, "I think it's important that we move as much electricity generation as possible to emissions-free and fuel-free alternatives, and nothing meets those goals as well as solar does. The financial costs of installing solar house-by-house, and the expected new technology equipment that's regularly coming available, make home-installed solar a tough pill

to swallow for homeowners. Community solar such as the co-op is implementing is, in my opinion, the best solution. Together with investments by people like myself, we can make a difference, in orders of magnitude, more effectively

than any alternative I can imagine. You can't do enough, and we can't support you enough—unborn generations of our descendants require that we undertake these things."

If you would like to be placed on our waiting list for community solar, please sign up through our online enrollment at blueridge.coop/communitysolar.

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