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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.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 J. Spencer Dalton, Jr., *Chairman*
 Len D. Talley, *Vice-Chairman*
 Franklin M. Looper, Jr., *Secretary*
 J. Mendel Stone, *Treasurer*
 Joel R. Davis
 Jimmy Lee Dodgens
 William G. Elrod
 Kenneth G. Southerlin

**PRESIDENT AND CHIEF
 EXECUTIVE OFFICER**
 Jim Lovinggood

This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Annual meeting recap, broadband progress report

THE 82ND EDITION of the Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative Annual Meeting of Members is now history. On

April 27 and 28, a total of 6,487 members participated in the meeting's drive-through registration process. Pleasant weather contributed to an exercise that saw members select either our Oconee or Pickens office as their place to register.

This time around, there were no contested seats on the Blue Ridge board of directors. At three separate district meetings of members conducted in early March, nominations were accepted for director candidates. Incumbents Joel Davis (Oconee District), Spencer Dalton (Pickens District) and Kenneth Southerlin (Greenville-Spartanburg District) were each nominated without opposition. The individual incumbents were then declared elected by acclamation to new three-year terms on the board. Congratulations to all three of these gentlemen.

As soon as registration closed at 5 p.m. on April 28, my management report became available for viewing on the cooperative's website, blueridge.coop. My brief remarks remain on the website for any who might want to watch them.

Highlighted topics

I devoted my comments to a number of topics. The cooperative's economic-development initiatives received some attention. So did my enumeration of a host of improvements made during 2021 to the co-op's distribution system that supplies power to our members. I also used the opportunity to note that Blue Ridge continues to operate on a sound financial footing.

One item I made sure to highlight was our Upcountry Fiber endeavor, supported jointly by Blue Ridge and West Carolina Rural Telephone Cooperative. As designed, this business enterprise will

ultimately extend high-speed internet across the entire 1,800-square-mile expanse of our Blue Ridge territory. In the 15 months since we installed our first span of fiber cable, more than 4,000 customers have been connected to our broadband network. At today's pace, we expect to have at least 8,000 locations hooked up to the service by the end of 2022.

Contacts from members

I've received numerous contacts from Blue Ridge members who are delighted with their new Upcountry Fiber service. At the same time, I've heard from quite a few folks who are anxious about when broadband might be coming to their neighborhoods. I'm in total sympathy with those inquirers—the service hasn't arrived at my country home yet either. What I can say is that our installation crews have "a heavy foot on the gas pedal." We're moving as rapidly as we can, and we hope the anticipated availability of additional funding might enable us to pick up the tempo even more. I do know that we'll deliver internet to everyone who wants it in the quickest manner possible.

From the Landrum area of northwestern Spartanburg County to the S.C. Welcome Center on I-85 in southwestern Oconee County; and from Eastatoe Valley in Pickens County's far north, to the large, unincorporated portions of Anderson County; and all locales in between, our plan is for Upcountry Fiber eventually to be the broadband provider for all those communities. Hopefully, that will prove to happen sooner, rather than later.

JIM LOVINGGOOD
 President and CEO



LIZA HOLDER

Drive-thru registration has proven to be a popular option for our members. Stephanie Dalton and Hank Hedden talk with a couple that registered at the Pickens office.



AMY CHILDRESS

Door prizes were given to each member registering during the two-day annual meeting event. BREC employee Stewart Wilkey gets a smile from a thankful Blue Ridge member.

Annual Meeting a success!

MORE THAN 6,400 members visited the co-op offices during the two days of the 2022 Annual Meeting and were greeted by enthusiastic employees. Goody bags and a waffle maker were given to each member. One member commented later in the week that there was no waffle mix to be found in the Upstate, and we heard time and time again how delicious those waffles were.

Following the close of the annual meeting, a drawing was held for numerous prizes, including a 2009 Ford F-150 pickup truck. Trey Barnett from Mountain Rest was the winner of the truck. Additional prizes were delivered or mailed to the winners. We appreciate all of you that took advantage of this year's drive-through registration and annual meeting.



AMANDA MACHEN

Sam McMillan (right), vice president of Operations, presents the key to this year's Grand Prize, a 2009 Ford F-150 to Trey Barnett.

Be prepared for summer storms

DESPITE ALL THE weather data and real-time alerts we have access to, summer storms can sometimes hit our area quickly and unexpectedly. The past several years have seen tornados and even hurricanes in our area—storms that have left property damage and outages in their wake. Whenever severe weather threatens, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative crews are ready to get to work. We encourage our members to also be prepared.

Have a plan

In the event of a tornado or hurricane, shelter in a pre-determined safe space such as your basement or a centrally-located room without windows, like a hallway or closet.

Have a backup

Whenever severe weather is projected, make sure your devices are fully charged and portable

power banks are ready to go. Have a storm kit—stocked with flashlights, a radio, water and other essentials—ready for use.

Stay informed

Listen to local weather updates to track the storm and visit our Facebook page for outage and restoration information.

Stay safe

High winds may bring power lines down. Remember, if you encounter downed lines while driving, turn around. Lines may still be energized. Never drive near or over them. If you encounter standing water while driving, turn around and find a safer route.

For more resources about preparing for storms and keeping track of important information, visit our website at blueridge.coop and click on Outage Center.

Call 1 (888) BLUERIDGE to report an outage.

Are you on our list?

REVENUE SHARING in the form of capital credits is one of the major hallmarks of a not-for-profit, cooperative utility. The cooperative uses the annual revenues that exceed operating costs to build equity. These funds, along with borrowed capital, allow Blue Ridge to continue to expand electric service to growing areas, as well as to employ new technologies for the improvement of power quality. Later, as the financial position of the cooperative permits, the assigned margins are returned to the members who originally paid them as part of their electric bills.

In April, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative refunded \$1,000,000 in capital credits to its members that were eligible to receive them. Checks were mailed representing margins earned by the cooperative in previous years of operation. Each check amount represented that member's pro-rata share of the net earnings during the years covered by the payment. In the past 40 years, more than \$30.2 million has been forwarded to recipients.

Occasionally we do not have updated addresses for our members that have capital credits payable to them and the checks are returned. To view a list of the people who have unclaimed capital credits go to our website at blueridge.coop/capitalcredits.