



Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc.

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8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.
Monday–Friday

President/CEO

William L. Fleming

Chairman of the Board

Melvin Carabo

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Attorney

Doug Jennings

Co-op News Editor

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Mission Statement

The aim of Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc. is to make electric energy available to its members at the lowest cost consistent with sound economy and good management.



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Supporting our youngest members

HOLIDAYS, especially Christmas, is a special time for children, and at Marlboro Electric Cooperative we give special attention to our future members every day.



We often talk a lot about the benefits of being a part of a cooperative—capital credits, *South Carolina Living* magazine, and much more, along with the services we provide to our members, such as home energy tips, convenient billing options, and fun events like our annual meeting and other activities. However, many of our value-added benefits are also directed at a younger audience: our children.

As I read in my favorite book, the Bible: “Teach your children to choose the right path, and when they are older, they will remain upon it.”—Proverbs 22:6.

It’s important that we support our youngest members, not only to enrich their lives, but also to instill in them the importance of cooperative membership, education and being good citizens. After all, these youngsters will one day become community leaders and possibly co-op leaders.

At Marlboro Electric, we send two high school juniors to Washington for a weeklong educational youth tour every June. For children of all ages, we provide safety demonstrations by going to schools to teach kids about electrical safety and to teach them energy-saving tips. In addition, we encourage students to make good grades and enter their report cards in our ‘Give Us An A’ program. Marlboro Electric supports the solar school program at Bennettsville Middle School for sixth-graders to learn about solar energy and renewable resources, as you can read about on page 20A. We also support local sports with sponsorships and other community activities.

Outreach with youth and improving the quality of life in the communities we serve is just one more way Marlboro Electric looks out for you. Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all future and current members from your friends here at Marlboro Electric Cooperative!

William L. “Bill” Fleming
President and CEO

Holiday Greetings from your co-op!

Closed November 24-25 for Thanksgiving, December 23 and 26 for Christmas and January 2 for New Year’s. Emergency crews will be on standby.

Students & teachers, apply for D.C. trip

Students may apply for the 2012 Washington Youth Tour (June 16–21) from December 1, 2011 to January 31, 2012. Applications are available at Marlboro Electric or online. Also, two South Carolina high school teachers or guidance

counselors will be chosen to serve as chaperones on the 2012 Washington Youth Tour. The deadline for interested teachers and counselors to apply is February 3, 2012. For more information, visit MarlboroElectric.coop or YouthTour.coop.



See pages 20A-D for more local MEC News.

A Ford family reunion

Pickup returns to original owners after 38 years



WALTER ALLREAD

BY WALTER ALLREAD

BACK IN JULY 1968, Howard O'Tuel Jr. special-ordered a Ford pickup. Six months later, he passed away and the truck was subsequently traded in for a Ford LTD sedan, but that wasn't before O'Tuel's son, Vernon, fell in love both with it and in it.

Vernon got his driver's license in the 1968 pickup and also dated the woman he eventually would marry, Ruby O'Tuel. For the O'Tuels, Marlboro Electric Cooperative members, the truck was never far from their minds or lives.

"We knew who had the truck for all of those years," Vernon says. "It was always close by. In all that time, I bet the truck didn't leave a 10-mile radius from here. And about as far as it ever went was Daddy took it one time to Greenville. It drank so much gas you couldn't take it too far!"

Vernon tried to buy the truck a few times over the years, but its owners wouldn't part with it. It wasn't until the truck passed to Vernon's sister in 2001 that he was able to buy it back in 2006 after she realized she wasn't going to be able to restore it.

The O'Tuels and their '68 Ford. "I'll always remember us going out on dates in it," says Ruby. (With them is their dog, Shortcake.)

"It stayed out of the family for a while, but it got back," says Vernon, who retired from the S.C. Forestry Commission and continues to operate a towing business. "The first thing I did was take it to Dean's Automotive in Cheraw, and we were able to restore it completely."

With a lot of wear and tear on it, including a previous wreck years ago for which it had body work done and having sat in storage for 21 years, Vernon tricked-out the restoration, going all-out with chrome bumpers, a



Vernon ordered this special tag to honor the truck's original owner—his father, Howard O'Tuel Jr.



Vernon went all-out on the restoration, ordering a new interior, steering wheel and restored seats.

new engine, new interior, new lights, restored seats and even a new steering wheel to make the truck road-ready for the next 40 years.

"I've opened it up a few times, and it does great," says Vernon, who also serves on the Elections and Credentials Committee at MEC's annual meetings. "It's a lot of fun to take it out on the road and show it off."

For Ruby, the truck, even in its restored condition and carrying 121,478 miles, never ceases to bring back fond memories.

"I'll always remember us going out on dates in it," says Ruby, who retired from Abbott Laboratories in 2002 and serves on MEC's volunteer Operation Round Up Trust board. "And it's still fun riding around in it now. It's just neat to have the same truck we used to go out in back where it belongs, back home."



News EXTRA



CHRISTY OVERSTREET

Growing Green With You

BY CHRISTY J. OVERSTREET

'HOPPING' WITH EXCITEMENT, Bennettsville Middle School sixth graders 'Dig It!' when it comes to growing green.

Planted in the minds of those students is a historical day for Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Bennettsville Middle School, City of Bennettsville and Santee Cooper as they celebrated 10 years of Green Power on October 15 with a commemorative tree-planting ceremony to symbolize the sustainability and environmental benefits of renewable energy.

"We can all say we played an important part in future growth ...we are planting our roots, and we are making history." Marlboro Electric's President and CEO Bill Fleming said. "Santee Cooper's Green Power program has grown along with the knowledge of the students, just as this tree will grow."

Fleming stressed, "It is critical that we challenge tomorrow's leaders to think about energy sources that benefit future generations."

The age-old, symbolic practice of planting a healthy, young tree, in the ground, represents life, hope, growth and

continuity. Trees stand firm throughout the years, changing and growing. Planting a tree for a dedication is a way to honor what the tree is desired to represent and the importance of what the tree will provide to the world through its lifetime.

The partnership of Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Santee Cooper, Marlboro County School District, the City of Bennettsville and Bennettsville Middle first occurred March 30, 2009, when Bennettsville Middle was dedicated as a Green Power Solar School. A state-of-the-art solar panel was installed on the school's site and a learning curriculum was implemented. The solar program teaches middle school students about the environment, power generation, and solar

Students were diggin' in when it came time to plant the live oak tree.

power opportunities and challenges associated with renewable energy.

"South Carolinians began powering their homes and business with Green Power 10 years ago," explained Steve Spivey, Santee Cooper's manager of renewable energy. "Today, Santee Cooper generates 28 megawatts of Green Power from generating stations fueled by landfill gas, solar and wind energy."

In partnership with the state's 20 electric cooperatives, Green Power is distributed to the state's electrical grid and offered for sale in all 46 counties of South Carolina. Green Power's revenues are reinvested 100 percent into renewable energy projects that benefit the state.

In the past decade,



Bennettsville Middle Principal Dr. Secaida Howell, left, and Marlboro County School Superintendent Dr. Helena Tillar, right, along with Assistant Principal William Jorgesen, teachers and school staff, not pictured, greeted Marlboro Electric on their sign and enjoyed the tree-planting activities.

Santee Cooper has generated approximately 580,000 megawatt-hours of Green Power and sold 163,559 megawatt-hours. Green Power sales today are equivalent to providing power to nearly 15,000 average American homes for one year or avoid the annual carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions of more than 24,000 vehicles. For more details, visit scgreenpower.com.

(Source: EPA 2011: e-Grid Version 1.1 SEVC Subregion System Average)



Marlboro Electric's Board Chairman Melvin Carabo helps plant the live oak tree in celebration of 10 years of Green Power.

Steve Spivey, Santee Cooper's manager of renewable energy, drove Santee Cooper's Green plug-in hybrid to the tree-planting ceremony.



Victims declare 'War' to cut copper theft



Sheriffs & Marlboro Electric announce special attack on copper theft crime

BY CHRISTY J. OVERSTREET

SPECIAL EMPHASIS on solving and prosecuting cases involving copper theft was jointly announced at a news conference by Sheriff Fred Knight of Marlboro County, Sheriff Major Hulon of Dillon County and Marlboro Electric Cooperative.

Coincidentally, Marlboro County law officials were dispatched the same morning of the press conference held on October 13 to Marlboro Electric's Burnt Factory substation where

someone stole about 100 feet of copper wire that costs more than \$700 to repair and replace.

Each month, Marlboro Electric is finding copper stolen from their infrastructure and the cost has grown to more than \$100,000 in replacement costs, materials, labor, time, etc. The co-op itself has been victimized by the vandalism of copper thieves on more than 1300 utility poles on roads and substations in both Marlboro and Dillon counties.

Copper theft doesn't affect just Marlboro Electric, but affects all utilities, individual citizens,

Supporting and standing behind Marlboro Electric's President and CEO Bill Fleming stands, l to r, Solicitor Will Rogers, Dillon Chief Deputy Larry Abraham, Dillon County Sheriff Major Hulon, Marlboro County Sheriff Fred Knight, Marlboro County Chief Deputy Charles Lemon along with Marlboro Electric's Board Chairman Melvin Carabo, Board members Bo McInnis and Eddie Gordon, and Attorney Doug Jennings.

members, churches, businesses and industries who suffer when copper has been stolen from them.

"Marlboro Electric has an infrastructure in place, and it is our job to provide reliable power to our members, which is being jeopardized by copper theft," Marlboro Electric's President and CEO Bill Fleming said. "We are



Each month, Marlboro Electric is finding copper stolen from their infrastructure and the cost has grown to more than \$100,000 in replacement costs, materials, labor, time, etc. Copper theft is costing the members!

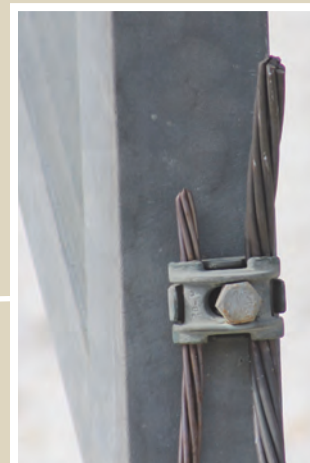
tired of being a victim of copper theft, and we have decided to take leadership in resolving this problem for our members and for our community."

Fleming added that not only does this crime affect the co-op and its members having to pay for replacement costs with copper theft, but the lives and safety of employees, members, and the community is in danger.

The price for copper has risen more than 500 percent and a new law was approved this year by the governor making it mandatory for copper retailers to obtain a license along with other identifiable information.

Marlboro Electric's Board of Trustees has been so concerned about losses caused by copper thieves

Marlboro Electric's Engineering Technician Mike Bailey shows Marlboro County law enforcement officers damages at the Burnt Factory Substation where copper thieves had stolen about 100 feet of copper wire.



CHRISTY OVERSTREET



that they recently voted to work with the sheriffs more closely to provide substantial reward money for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for copper theft.

“Every citizen in our community has a stake in this problem, and we are all affected,” said Marlboro Electric’s Board Chairman Melvin Carabo. “We hope that people will take this crime more seriously and will help us put a real dent in the huge problem of copper theft.” Carabo pointed out what an expensive problem this

Cutting copper lines from utility units of thousands of volts can cause death for the thief and utility employees.

has become for Marlboro Electric and its members.

Co-op and law enforcement officials have noticed that the copper stolen has been a professional job, indicating that the thieves probably either work or have worked with wire and have the knowledge, tools and skills to do so.

In announcing the enhanced and significant amount of reward money, Sheriff Fred Knight said, “I stand here with Sheriff Major Hulon of Dillon County to announce that Marlboro Electric Cooperative’s Board of Trustees has stepped up to the plate to assist local law enforcement to **DECLARE WAR ON COPPER THEFT!**”

Sheriff Knight emphasized that they can only solve this very important public crime problem in our counties if ordinary citizens help by “keeping their eyes and ears open” and pass on to law enforcement any information they obtain. He also indicated that they are prepared to pay out a substantial reward to anyone who provides information which leads directly to solving any copper theft case in which Marlboro Electric Cooperative is the victim.

Dillon County Sheriff Major Hulon added that since both Dillon and Marlboro counties sit on the border of the NC/SC state line, copper stolen down here is being sold or disposed of in North Carolina, giving rise to the possibility of prosecuting these cases in Federal court.

Hulon stated, “We need to send a loud and clear message to copper thieves and people buying stolen copper that you **WILL GO TO JAIL!**” ☞

Dillon County Sheriff Major Hulon, left, and Chief Deputy Larry Abraham discuss tactics with Marlboro County Chief Deputy Charles Lemon and Sheriff Fred Knight, right. Marlboro Electric Board member Bo McInnis, far right, emphasizes the prosecution of copper thieves with Solicitor Will Rogers. Investigator Shawn Feldner, background, leads the investigation of many of the copper theft cases in Marlboro County.

Anyone with information relating to theft, distribution and/or selling of any copper from Marlboro Electric Cooperative, or any other victim, is encouraged to report that information to Sheriff Fred Knight at (843) 479-5605 or Sheriff Major Hulon at (843) 774-1433.



If this one substation goes out, due to copper theft, it would cause 1,210 citizens and an industry to be without power. That industry would be without power, jobs, and production. Not including the cost to replace the million-dollar transformer. However, the biggest cost is the safety of the people who are jeopardized, such as the workers, members and law enforcement.

Domtar receives prestigious award

DOMTAR WAS HONORED as one of South Carolina's leading manufacturers and received the prestigious 2011 Silver Crescent Award at the sixteenth annual Salute to Manufacturing on September 22 at the TD Convention Center in Greenville. Marlboro Electric Cooperative had nominated Domtar-Marlboro Mill, its largest industry load, by completing an extensive application process about its numerous contributions to the community.

"It is a great honor to be recognized with the Silver Crescent Award as one of the top manufacturers in our great state," Marlboro Mill Manager Bill Edwards said. "For the Domtar Marlboro Mill, this is truly a team effort and a tribute to the 325 great team members, contractors and suppliers that make our mill successful."

Honored by South Carolina Secretary of Commerce Bobby Hitt and a full house of industry leaders as the 2011 recipients of the prestigious Silver Crescent Award for Manufacturing Excellence were Small Manufacturer Cox Industries (fewer than 200 employees) of Orangeburg, Midsized Domtar Paper Company-Marlboro Mill Manufacturer (200-499 employees) of Bennettsville, and Large Manufacturer Robert Bosch LLC (500+ employees) of Charleston. He also cited South Carolina's strong commitment to nurturing and attracting innovative manufacturers of

all types and sizes to the Palmetto State.

The awards luncheon was attended by more than 350 business executives, community and political leaders, and manufacturing industry representatives from across South Carolina. Honorees were chosen from a



CONTRIBUTED

Present for the award presentation were Domtar's Manager of Communications & Government Relations of Fort Mill Stefan Nowicki, left, Recovery and Utilities Administrative Technician Donna Skipper, Recovery and Utilities Technician Will Adams, Purchasing and Logistics Manager Bernie Stewart, Procurement Forester Scott Smearman, Executive Secretary Bettie Fleming, and Fiberline Technician Ray Ogilvie, right.



BETTIE FLEMING

Friends of the Domtar-Marlboro Mill present to show their support were Marlboro Electric's John Powers, Domtar's Purchasing and Logistics Manager Bernie Stewart, Northeastern Technical College President Dr. Ron Bartley and NETC's Dean of Continuing Education Sherrie Chapman.

statewide slate of finalist companies nominated for product and process quality improvements; quality of life for employees; environmental stewardship; community and professional involvement; commitment to economic development; community partnerships, green or sustainability initiatives, and innovation and efficiency programs.

"Our goal is to recognize the best of the best in South Carolina manufacturing—whether large, medium or small in company size—and these 22 finalists represent the very best our state has to offer," said Tony Smith, president of The Silver Crescent Foundation.

The Silver Crescent Award was established by the Silver Crescent Foundation to honor outstanding small, midsized and large manufacturers from across South Carolina, and to promote awareness of the importance of manufacturing to our standard of living and quality of life in the Palmetto State.

The Silver Crescent Foundation's mission is to increase awareness of the importance of manufacturing among the general public by promoting manufacturing vitality and career opportunities in South Carolina. ☺

To learn more visit silvercrescentsc.org.



JOHN POWERS

Domtar-Marlboro Mill received this prestigious Silver Crescent Foundation Mid-Sized Manufacturer award.