



James P. "Pat" Howle
CEO and Executive Vice President

What you see is not always what you get

In the December edition of Living in South Carolina Magazine, I made a commitment to see the world through the eyes of my granddaughter. I also renewed my commitment of communicating information that is of concern to all of us who are member/owners of Horry Electric Cooperative.

A plastic society

There is a commercial running on television that I first took note of during the holidays. A very organized process of people ordering, receiving and then paying for food is shown, and it is evident that the sole reason for the efficiency is the use of a credit or debit card. The minute a guy pulls cash out of his pocket to pay for his food, the entire system collapses.

Financial advisors who work with people swamped with credit card debt will

tell you that when you pay for something with a credit card, you're going to end up paying much more than the actual price of the item. Even if it was on sale.

Whipping out a credit card to pay for something is easy and convenient. For the most part, carrying and using a credit card is much safer than carrying cash and certainly easier to carry around than a checkbook.

Plastic a fterburn

Just as there are possible gastric consequences when you eat a heavy meal or something that is particularly spicy or greasy, there is definite afterburn when you use a credit card. When you use a credit card to do business with anyone, there are two sides to each transaction. As the headline to my column reads, what you see is not always what you get.

On the consumer side of the transaction, you sign the credit card slip and you're free to take the item you're purchasing from the store. If you're paying for a service, your account is credited. All is good until you look at your credit card statement, which very nearly requires a specialized degree to weed through and figure out all of the finance charges, transaction fees and the mounting interest charges if you carry a balance. If you're like me, you certainly didn't see that coming when you whipped the card out and left the store with your purchase.

On the business side of the transaction, it looks equally clean and efficient on the surface. Unfortunately, we experience afterburn in the form of charges for processing credit card transactions.

Here's the deal (and your sign)

We are not against credit cards, and we don't have any plans to discontinue accepting them from members who wish to use them to pay their electric bill. We just want you to realize that you have several payment options, and we're encouraging you to consider all of them.

In person: You can pay your bill in person at the Conway office on Cultra Road, the

Socastee office on Highway 707; the HTC office on Highway 9 in Longs or at NBSC in Loris or Conway National Bank in Aynor. The Conway and Socastee offices also feature a drive-through option.

By mail: Checks or money orders can be mailed along with your payment stub to Horry Electric at our post office address in Conway.

By credit card: We accept credit cards in person, over the phone and online at www.horryelectric.com. **This is the most expensive transaction type we process.** As with most things these days, the cost for processing credit cards is rising. Many utilities, including Horry Electric, have already evaluated and are planning to soon implement a convenience fee to pass the cost to members who use a credit card to pay their electric bill to cover the cost of the transaction.

By Bank Draft: As promised, here's your sign. On both sides of the transaction, bank draft is the most efficient and the most economical way to pay your electric bill each month. You'll receive a statement of your charges each month, and you won't have to worry about anything more than making sure you have money in the bank. Payment is automatically drafted from the account you designate on the due date stated on your bill.

What you see is what you get

For your convenience, the page facing my comments this month includes additional information about and a sign-up form for our Bank Draft program. More than 9,000 of your fellow member/owners, including me, are participating in the program. It's free and easy! In this case, what you see really is what you get.

James P. "Pat" Howle
Executive Vice President and CEO

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner
The power of human connections 

P.O. Box 119
Conway, SC 29528-0119
Conway Office: 369-2211
Socastee Office: 650-7530


(to report power outages only)
369-2212

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Pay your electric bill on time, every time — without writing a check!



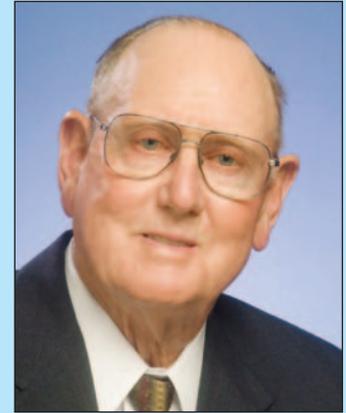
The Bank Draft Program from Horry Electric Cooperative makes it easier to pay your bill on time and to keep track of drafts. When you sign up for this program, Horry Electric will automatically draft your checking or savings account for the amount of your monthly electric bill. You'll still receive monthly statements showing kilowatt-hour usage and the amount due, but you won't have to write a check.

The best part is that you won't ever have to worry about your payment getting to Horry Electric on time. Your account will not be drafted until the actual due date indicated on your bill. If that date

falls on a bank holiday, it will be drafted the following business day. As with writing a check, all you have to do is make sure there is adequate money in your account. Otherwise, it will be processed as a return check and additional charges will be applied.

Simplify your life! Just fill out and send us the form at the bottom of the page. It may take a few days to process your request; so continue to pay your bill until 'Bank Draft' appears on it. After that, you'll never have to remember to write a check to Horry Electric to pay your electric bill again!

If you have any questions about Bank Draft, contact us at 369-2211. 



*In loving memory
of*

*Henry G. McNeill
January 3, 2007*

*58 years of
dedicated service to
Horry Electric Cooperative*

*He was a leader, a friend
and a strong advocate
for the people
of Horry County.*

You can mail or bring by your completed authorization form. You'll need to include a **VOIDED** check so we can obtain the correct bank account number and ABA/Transit number. Please allow five working days for your authorization form to be processed. Authorization forms can also be found on the back of your monthly electric bill.



BANK DRAFT AUTHORIZATION

Date: _____ Bank: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

CONSUMER'S CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact Name: _____

Phone # _____ Best Time for a CSR to Contact You: _____ AM _____ PM _____

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. : I hereby authorize and direct you until further written notice to honor and charge to my bank account **DRAFTS** drawn on my checking savings account and payable to **Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.** in the amount of the monthly statement rendered on the account(s) listed below.

HORRY ELECTRIC MEMBER ACCOUNT NUMBER(S)

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

HEC shall not be liable for returning any such drafts unpaid if the balance in my account is insufficient to pay the same upon presentation.

Signature: _____

Type or print full name: _____

Music man sets own beat, off the beaten path

*Store, studio bring
musicians of all styles
out to co-op country*

By Walter Allread

It's a sunny Saturday as two boys play in the yard next door to Carl and Precilla Wiesener's country home near Conway. They're apparently visiting for the first time, because the melody wafting from a metal building behind the Wieseners' house surprises them.

Even a kid can tell it's not just someone goofing around with a karaoke machine. It sounds too good, too professional.

*Some people live for the fortune
and some people live for the fame ...*

"Is somebody singing in there?" one boy asks a visitor headed into the unassuming structure. "Sure are," he's told. "Recording, too."

Indeed, it's a whole other world beyond the building's light-blue door. The boys might be even more surprised



Carl Wiesener adjusts recording levels as Samantha Ward sings Alicia Key's "If I Ain't Got You" in Wiesener's studio at Father & Son Music, inset above.

to learn that the singer they're hearing is only a few years older than they. She's Samantha Ward, then only 16, but possessed with such a mature, powerful voice that she can match Alicia

Key's original performance of "If I Ain't Got You" note for note.

*Some people live for the power, yeah
Some people live just to play the game*

Samantha is recording in Wiesener's studio, inside his business, Father & Son Music. They're using headphones, so, for the boys next door and the customers up front, it sounds like Samantha's singing a cappella. Which is very good indeed. As Wiesener tells Samantha: "You did great."

A half-hour later, the finished track, with music and vocals now mixed together, floods out of big speakers inside the store. Samantha smiles. "It's got more soul," she says. "Mr. Carl, can I get a copy of that?"

*Some people want it all
But I don't want nothing at all
If I ain't got you baby*

The song is special to Samantha. "That's the first song I ever recorded here," she says.



Walter Allread

Wiesener talks with professional guitarist Sam Favata as Devan Toledo, left, awaits a guitar lesson with instructor Alan Grundy. Looking on is Palmer Rabon, lower right, an Horry Electric member who brought his son, Blake, to Father & Son for a guitar lesson.

“I did it in about seventh grade, about four years ago. I just started crying because I’d never heard myself before on a CD.”

Laid back and fun

Samantha says Wiesener’s laid-back approach makes recording “fun. He makes it easy.” She adds, “He’s a nice man. I liked him right off the bat. He’s a friend of my vocal coach, Kathleen Seymour.”

After Samantha and her grandmother thank Wiesener and leave, in comes another singer, a professional vocalist from Charleston who has been performing in a Grand Strand nightclub. She needs to replace her microphone stand. Wiesener gives her a good deal.

As she heads out, she runs into an old friend, another pro, local guitarist Sam Favata. Favata tells Wiesener he’s surprised to see his friend from Charleston “out here in the middle of nowhere.” He shouldn’t be.

Ready for the country

Father & Son, which is served by Horry Electric, has been attracting musicians of all ages and styles since Wiesener opened it in 1999.

The shop was originally located in the Conway Wal-Mart but Wiesener lost his lease in 2003. Undeterred, he decided he was “ready for the country,” as Neil Young once sang. His customers followed him.

That took a little effort, too. Even though Father & Son is less than a mile from U.S. Hwy. 501, it’s well off the beaten path. The store is located just off Enoch Road, on an unpaved road — at 4961 Murray Johnson Road, to be exact. A billboard on Hwy. 501, featuring a big photo of Wiesener, helps steer customers to the unlikely location.

Once they go beyond Father & Son’s inconspicuous façade, they find a store crammed with instruments, accessories, sheet music and, sometimes, musicians — both experienced and aspiring. Many of the latter come for classes with Alan Grundy, who teaches bass, guitar, mandolin and banjo lessons at Father & Son.

While Wiesener was in the studio with

Samantha, Grundy found a corner of the store to tutor his students. Young and old, they worked on everything from down-home country licks to the bass groove to Earth Wind & Fire’s “That’s the Way of the World.”

From rock to ‘Rock of Ages’

Waiting for his turn, young guitar student Devan Toledo, says he likes coming to Father & Son. “This is the best place to hang out,” says Devan. He runs through the opening chords of the rock classic, “Smoke on the Water,” apparently still a rite of passage for aspiring rockers.

Wiesener, 57, grew up playing rock and blues in Kings Mountain, N.C. He still enjoys jamming with talented players but, these days, favors what he calls “my gospel stuff” over the Top 40.

Wiesener’s musical transition is also reflected in his business’ name, which confuses some visitors. If anyone asks Wiesener which he is, he says neither. The father and son in question are Wiesener’s new Top 2, up in Heaven.

Wiesener combines his faith and his love of music in other ways. He offers free advice to church customers who sometimes face technical challenges operating their sound systems, which he sells. Twice a year, Wiesener offers affordable courses on sound engineering. “I try to clue them in on how to use the system. If I teach one person, I recommend that they teach someone else at their church,” he adds. “I do the sound school to try to keep them from being taken advantage of.”

Wiesener is keen to help young people share his passion for music. He keeps band instruments affordable. “A kid shouldn’t be denied a chance to play because his parents can’t afford the instrument,” says Wiesener, who also volunteered to handle the sound for last year’s Conway Idol competition.

Throwing down, down a dirt road

And, even if his “gospel stuff” is his inspiration these days, Wiesener can still talk the talk with visiting secular musicians. It’s apparent as he and Favata compare notes on the world-class talent

featured at the Bass Extremes International Solo Bass Competition and Concert held in October at Coastal Carolina University.

Favata couldn’t make the show, he says: “I had a gig that night.” They both praise Victor Wooten, one of the event’s stars and a member of the Grammy-winning group Bela Fleck & The Flecktones. Wiesener tells Favata, “Victor is the man!” (He also loves the playing of Steve Bailey, the artist in residence at Coastal Carolina who put Bass Extremes together with Wooten. Wiesener calls Bailey “the supreme technique bassist.”)

Later, sizing up another musician, Wiesener says, “That cat can throw down!”

Thanks to Wiesener, “country music” is taking on a whole new meaning down at least one dirt road in Horry County. 

Statement of nondiscrimination

Horry Electric Cooperative Inc., is the recipient of Federal financial assistance from the Rural Utilities Service, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and is subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, and the rules and regulations of the U.S. Department of Agriculture which provide that no person in the United States on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, or handicap shall be excluded from participation in, admission or access to, denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any of this organization’s programs or activities.

The person responsible for coordinating this organization’s nondiscrimination compliance efforts is ABIGAIL LEWIS, HUMAN RESOURCES COORDINATOR. Any individual, or specific class of individuals, who feels that this organization has subjected them to discrimination may obtain further information about the statutes and regulations listed above from, and/or file a written complaint, with this organization; or the Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250; or the Administrator, Rural Utilities Service, Washington, D.C. 20250. Complaints must be filed within 180 days after the alleged discrimination. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Attention high school juniors!

All high school juniors in Horry County are invited to compete for the opportunity to travel to Washington, DC, and represent Horry Electric Cooperative at the Rural Electric Youth Tour this summer! The Youth Tour is scheduled for June 9 - 14, 2007.

Students who submit applications will be asked to take a short exam based on study materials provided by the Cooperative. A personal interview with representatives from Horry Electric Cooperative and the Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina is also part of the competition.

Grades and class ranking are not a consideration in this competition. Each student will be judged on his or her written test score and on the compilation of scores collected during the personal interviews.

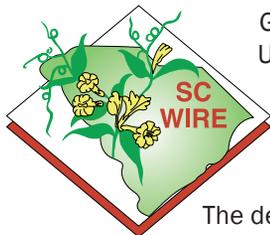
Deadline for applications is February 16. Applications are available through guidance counselors at local high schools. Applications may also be picked up from Horry Electric Cooperative's main office on Cultra Road in Conway or from the Socastee office.



...AND...

high school seniors, look at THIS!

Horry Electric Cooperative WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification) scholarship applications are now available! You can get one at the Guidance Counselor's Office at all Horry County high schools and at either of Horry Electric Cooperative's office locations.



Graduating seniors who will be attending Coastal Carolina University or Horry-Georgetown Technical College in the Fall of 2007 may apply.

Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

The deadline for applications is March 30, 2007.

Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

Your Touchstone Energy® Partner
The power of human connections



HEC 2007 Youth Tour

Application/Nomination Form
HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS ONLY

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

HEC Acct. Number: _____

Social Security Number: _____

Congressional District: _____

Parent's/Guardian's Names: _____

Guidance Counselor: _____

Phone Number: _____

How did you find out about Youth Tour 2007?

Recommended/Approved By: _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please list academic and athletic school activities as well as civic and church activities. All applications must include a summary of the student's activities.

All qualified applicants will be required to take a written test and participate in a personal interview. No essays will be accepted. Applications are open to all high school juniors, regardless of class rank or grade point average.

Send completed application forms to
Toni Gore, Youth Tour Coordinator;
Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.;
Post Office Box 119;
Conway, SC 29528-0119

**APPLICATION DEADLINE IS
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2007.**



An ice storm or other act of nature may occur at any time

How to prepare for a winter outage

If an ice storm or other act of nature causes you to lose power this winter, here are some tips to prepare and stay safe:

Portable generators: You can purchase a portable electric generator that will temporarily supply power to your home or office during an outage. Make sure they are installed and used correctly and plug them into individual appliances, not your home's wiring system. If you "backfeed" power into the co-op's system, you could kill our lineworkers who, while trying to restore your power, believe the lines near your home are not energized.

Appliances: Unplug appliances during an outage to protect them from a power surge when the electricity comes back on. Keep one lamp plugged in with the switch turned on so you'll know when power has been restored.

Computers: It's important that your computers, printers and scanners always be connected to a surge protector to reduce the chance of damage if the power goes off. As with appliances, however, you may wish to unplug computers and other sensitive home electronics during an extended outage.

Water: Store enough fresh water to last each member of your family five days; sometimes an outage will disable pumps that operate area water systems. Store one gallon of water per day, per person, for drinking, washing, cooking and sanitation. Commercially bottled water is also good.

Refrigeration: Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Refrigerated food will stay cold for four hours or more; and frozen foods may stay frozen for up to two days. Purchase ice and dry ice if necessary.

Telephones: Cordless phones and answering machines won't work during an outage. Always have at least one phone that isn't dependent on electricity.

Cash: Keep extra cash on hand in case ATMs aren't functioning.

Emergency kit: You need an emergency kit for your family that includes any prescription drugs you or your loved ones require. In addition, your kit should have blankets, flashlights, batteries, an AM/FM battery-powered radio, a wind-up or battery alarm clock, and light sticks.

Source: Kentucky Living

Restoring power: Who's on first?

If Horry Electric Cooperative has a localized service interruption, like a downed line or pole, power restoration is relatively easy: Send out a crew and fix it. But if widespread damage from a storm or other cause occurs, we take it step by step. By restoring power from the distribution points down, we can restore your power faster. Here is the general sequence we follow:

Substations: In major outages, our first priority is to repair the substations that feed power to many members, if that is where the problem is.

Main lines or feeders: If the interruption is on a main line carrying electricity from the substations to each community we serve, many members are affected. They are our next priority. Once power has begun to flow through these lines again, we can focus our attention on the needs of individual members.

Taps: These are the lines that bring power to smaller groups of members who live on the same road or share the same hillside. Horry Electric will restore taps that serve the most members first; connecting the individual service lines that link taps with individual homes and businesses.

Small taps and individual service lines: Those lines that serve just one or two members will be restored next. Often, power is restored to these members as the main lines are re-energized. If there is still a problem on a tap or service line, some members may see their neighbors' lights go on, while their power is still out.

Other priorities: Horry Electric maintains a database of people with special power needs such as life support equipment or emergency services, including police, rescue, ambulance and fire stations. Horry Electric also encourages members with special requirements to install backup power sources or make arrangements with relatives or neighbors for help or temporary living arrangements during prolonged outages.

Source: Kootenai (Idaho) Electric Cooperative