

## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.

[www.horryelectric.com](http://www.horryelectric.com)

### Main Office

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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**Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. is a non-profit, member-owned organization providing information and energy-related services on a fair and equitable basis.**



Your Touchstone Energy® Partner

## Reward!

### Stop copper thieves—it's definitely worth your while

**PAYBACK** for copper thieves could mean a payday for you.

South Carolina's electric cooperatives recently donated \$15,000 to Crime Stoppers of South Carolina to help provide rewards up to \$1,000 for tips leading to successful criminal prosecution of copper thieves.



If you missed our October cover story, allow us to highlight again our public awareness campaign to combat copper theft in local communities: Horry Electric and other S.C. co-ops have partnered with Crime Stoppers of South Carolina, a non-profit organization that offers cash rewards for tips that solve active crimes. We're out to alert people to the costs and dangers associated with copper theft.

The possibility of earning a reward isn't the only way you can benefit: Copper theft losses and repair costs are ultimately borne by co-op members—and they run into the thousands. Collectively, S.C. electric co-ops have spent more than \$1 million on copper theft-related incidents since the start of 2011. According to a 2010 study by the U.S. Department of Energy, copper theft costs American utilities \$300 million a year.

The crime also endangers co-op lineworkers and members as well as their property. If a copper thief takes the ground wire at the meter, there's less protection for the home against surges that lightning strikes can cause. For the co-ops, copper theft at substations or other facilities seriously jeopardizes our operations and endangers our employees.

It's hard to muster much sympathy for thieves—or would-be thieves, since there have been numerous incidents of people being electrocuted while attempting to steal copper. If you think you may know someone who is tempted to try it, do him or her a favor and call 1-888-CRIMESC (274-6372). You might save a life, including that of the innocent people that copper theft endangers.

Anyone who has any information about copper thieves can call Crime Stoppers and give us a chance to put these criminals where they belong. By doing your part, you'll help hold down the cost of your electric service while helping us keep it reliable and safe. Thank you!

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

### Report copper theft

#### Call 1-888-CRIMESC (274-6372)

To report copper theft, contact Crime Stoppers at 1-888-CRIMESC or [sccrimestoppers.com](http://sccrimestoppers.com).

All tips are anonymous, and your information may make you eligible for a \$1,000 reward if it leads to a successful criminal prosecution.



LINDSEY SMITH

The South Carolina Youth Tour representatives took in all the sights and sounds of D.C. including the Lincoln Memorial, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and, of course, the Capitol.

## Chance of a lifetime

**IF YOU ARE** a high school junior living in Horry County, then you're qualified to apply for a chance to participate in a five-day, expense-paid trip to the nation's capital on the 2013 Washington Youth Tour.

Winners of Horry Electric Cooperative's local Youth Tour competition will join students from around the state and nation June 15-20. They'll tour historic sites, learn about our nation's government and have lots of fun shopping, dining out, seeing a play and cruising the Potomac at sunset.

Nearly 1,500 students participate each year and two of them are there representing Horry Electric Cooperative. Information packets have been distributed to Horry County schools. A quiz and personal interview

are part of the selection process. Study materials are sent to nominated students well in advance of the date scheduled for the selection process.

Grade point averages are not a consideration. Two alternates will be selected in the event one or both winners is unable to participate.

Applications, made available to guidance counselors in January, are also available online at [horryelectric.com](http://horryelectric.com) or by contacting Horry Electric Cooperative's Youth Tour Coordinator Toni Gore at 369-6359 or [toni.gore@horryelectric.com](mailto:toni.gore@horryelectric.com). To find out more about this exciting chance of a lifetime for high school juniors, visit [horryelectric.com](http://horryelectric.com) or [youthtour.coop](http://youthtour.coop) Application deadline is Friday, February 1. ☺



## Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc.



### HEC 2013 Youth Tour

Application/Nomination Form  
HIGH SCHOOL JUNIORS ONLY

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Horry Electric Cooperative Account

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Congressional District: \_\_\_\_\_

Parents'/Guardians' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Guidance Counselor: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about Youth  
Tour 2013? \_\_\_\_\_

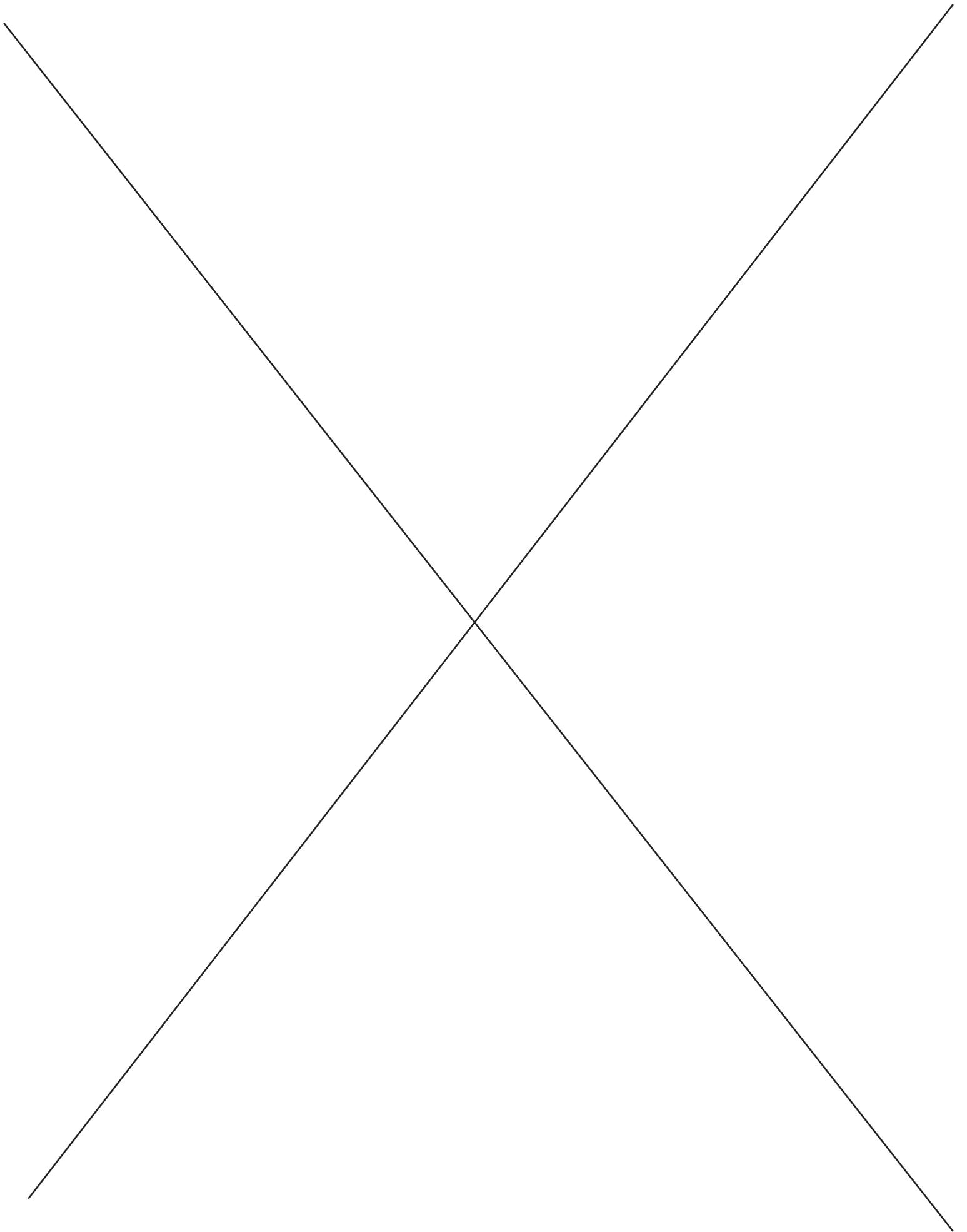
Recommended/Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

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 1**



## Safer seniors

WIRE-4-Safety puts smoke detectors in older HEC members' homes

**MORE THAN** 3,000 people die in home fires each year in the United States; most of whom are in homes without a working smoke alarm. Adults in South Carolina over the age of 60 are more than three times as likely to die in a fire as the rest of the state's population.

Fortunately, many seniors in Horry Electric's service area are now safer thanks to the efforts of WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification), a community outreach organization at co-ops across South Carolina.

Statewide, the organization funded the purchase of more than 700 smoke alarms, which members of the WIRE chapter at Horry Electric have helped to distribute as part of its WIRE-4-Safety program. HEC's chapter has distributed 80 smoke alarms to local co-op members over the age of 60.

### Addressing Special Needs

"Far too many people have died in fires as a result of not having working smoke alarms or sprinklers," says Susan Brown, WIRE chapter president and executive assistant at Horry Electric. "One person killed in a home fire is just too many. Together, we can make sure these alarms get into the homes of our older members and help save lives."



George and Joanne Vereen of Galivant's Ferry were among the HEC members who received smoke alarms from WIRE. Another was Beulah Dorman of Aynor, shown with Lynn Elvis, left, and Susan Brown of HEC's WIRE chapter. In the background is Mrs. Dorman's husband, Billy, who will be safer with the alarm in place.

Helping was WIRE member Lynn Elvis, coordinator of HEC's Special Needs program. The program helps keep the co-op in touch with members who have medical conditions that require life support equipment or who have other special needs.

Elvis contacted many Special Needs members to let them know smoke alarms were available. She stressed that working smoke detectors are the first line of defense in saving lives. "If your smoke alarms are over 10 years old, they're no



JESSIE HENDRICK



good," as she told recipients.

### Raising awareness

That advice came by way of the speaker at a special event announcing WIRE-4-Safety, Kathy Nieuwenhuis, public education specialist with Horry County Fire Rescue (HCFR). The department also installed smoke detectors for WIRE.

Horry County Fire Rescue provides fire protection to the unincorporated areas of Horry County and

**Kathy Nieuwenhuis, public education specialist with Horry County Fire Rescue, which installed WIRE-4-Safety smoke alarms.**

emergency medical care for the entire county. Like Horry Electric, it serves most of Horry County, which covers more than 1,134 square miles, making it the largest county east of the Mississippi.

In such a large area—much of it remote—Nieuwenhuis says awareness is the key for rural Horry County residents who, like WIRE's members, want to help their elderly neighbors: "Be aware of neighbors, what needs they may have,"

she stresses. "Be there to provide assistance."

She noted that Horry Electric provided smoke detectors her department distributed when she started with HCFR 16 years ago. With assistance from FEMA as well as regional partners, the department still offers free smoke detectors for residents who cannot afford to purchase them. HCFR, which also offers detectors for the deaf and hearing impaired, installs the smoke alarms at no cost. ☺

**For more information, contact Nieuwenhuis at 915-7061 or email [nieuwenk@horrycounty.org](mailto:nieuwenk@horrycounty.org).**

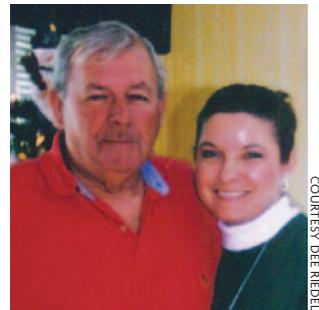
## The spirit of cooperation



Dee Riedel with members of the cheerleading squad she coaches at North Myrtle Beach Middle School, and with her father, retired co-op lineman Harry Blume, inset below.

two weeks to put on at our home games.”

Coaching the high-energy group takes Riedel back again to her own childhood. Sports and extracurricular activities kept Dee and sisters Donna, Dena and Devon busy. The oldest, and something of a tomboy, Dee recalls that when she and Donna, the second oldest, attended the co-op’s annual meeting of members. “Everybody would say, ‘There’s Little Harry!’”



COURTESY DEE RIEDEL

### Raised co-op, she’s home again with HEC

BY WALTER ALLREAD

AS DOROTHY SAYS in *The Wizard of Oz*, “There’s no place like home!” For Dee Riedel, being at home means being part of an electric co-op.

Riedel, who wrote us the letter below a couple of months back, knows “the co-op way” better than most. Her father, Harry Blume, retired from Edisto Electric Co-op, based in Bamberg, a decade ago. Growing up in a lineman’s home, she and her sisters grew accustomed to a particular sound:

“I can remember the phone ringing all hours of the night for Daddy to go out when somebody’s lights went out,” Riedel says, smiling as she recalls his nights on call. “For a long time we thought Daddy’s name was the only name they had! It seemed like we got all the phone calls.”

A common refrain in the Blume household was, “Daddy, it’s for you!”

Riedel and her husband, Steven, a millwright and welder for Canfor Southern Pine, previously resided in Greenwood, where they had electric service from an investor-owned utility (IOU). Today, they enjoy living “on co-op lines,” as co-op folks like to say,

outside of Conway. For Riedel, S.C. *Living* is the icing on the cake.

She raised two sons, Patrick Nettles, a Lander graduate who still lives in Greenwood, and Ross Nettles, a USC education major. Riedel herself works as support staff at North Myrtle Beach Middle School, where she’s also the cheerleading coach. “That’s a full-time job!” she jokes.

### ‘Little Harry’

Her girls show the true spirit of cooperation, she says. “I’ve got a really good squad. I’m really proud of them. We learn a new dance every

### Dear HEC

My dad and my uncle both worked for Edisto Electric Cooperative for many years and have now retired. Before moving to Horry County I was not privileged enough to be a member of the co-op. Now in Horry County I have been able to start receiving your magazine again.

I just wanted to drop you a line to let you know how much I enjoy receiving your magazine every month. The hometown stories are so personal and the list of events is a great help. A lot of the festivals I would know nothing about if I did not receive your magazine. I really enjoyed this month (September 2012) reading about the baseball teams in Aynor. I am a huge baseball fan and that was a wonderful story to have published. My most favorite piece is always the recipes. Always up for new food items.

I hope you will continue your publication and I hope that others receive as much reading enjoyment as I do from your magazine.

Sincerely,

Dee Riedel  
Conway

a special camaraderie. What Riedel says about her father's fellow linemen could also be said of Horry Electric's—or of any co-op's: "I think they depended on each other as much as the co-op members depended on them."

Crews from different co-ops sometimes pull together, like when South Carolina's electric co-ops help one another restore service after major storms. "My biggest memory was when Hugo went through and [Edisto lineworkers] all were taken to Charleston," she recalls. "Daddy was gone for a long period of time, working on outages."

"I think that was my biggest concern. ... You just never know. What they do is so dangerous. I've heard lots of horror stories and seen lots of things that have happened. You always say that little prayer right before they leave, 'Please bring them home safely.'"

She cringes recalling her father's Hugo stories. Linemen like him and her uncle, Bobby Blume, also with Edisto at the time, had to fend off snakes as they waded into flooded areas to rebuild lines. ("Water and electricity—not a good combination," Riedel notes.) Bobby Blume now works for the co-ops' state association and has helped train many linemen, including plenty of Horry's.

### Swamp connections

Riedel grew up in the Lemon Swamp community near Bamberg, which she jokes some still call Blumeville. Her father and her mother, Patsy, and her sisters still reside there. She and Steven now live in another "swamp" community, Tilly Swamp, where they enjoy connecting with a whole new set of rural neighbors.

After being in an IOU-served area, Riedel couldn't be happier to be back on co-op lines. "Big difference—night and day!" Riedel says. "You can tell the difference with a home-based co-op rather than a big corporate outfit. At a co-op, they have a heart." ☺

## Timeless lessons from a record winter storm 40 years ago

February 9–11 marks the 40th anniversary of a record "Southern blizzard" that walloped Georgia and South Carolina in 1973.

A one-day record 24 inches of white stuff dumped on Rimini in Sumter County, according to the S.C. Department of Natural Resources. Bamberg, where Dee Riedel's father, Harry Blume, was working for Edisto Electric Co-op, had 22 inches. Even Conway got a foot.

As Blume recalls, "It started snowing Friday that afternoon. They said, 'It ain't gone be much.' Well, it snowed all night!"

As soon as they dug themselves out and got their members' lights back on, S.C. co-op crews did what they always do: They helped one another.

Blume, who worked his share of major outages, including Hurricane Hugo, stayed local in '73: "I had a four-wheel-drive Chevrolet pickup so the co-op had me driving people to work around town. I was driving nurses back to work at the hospital and helping other people."

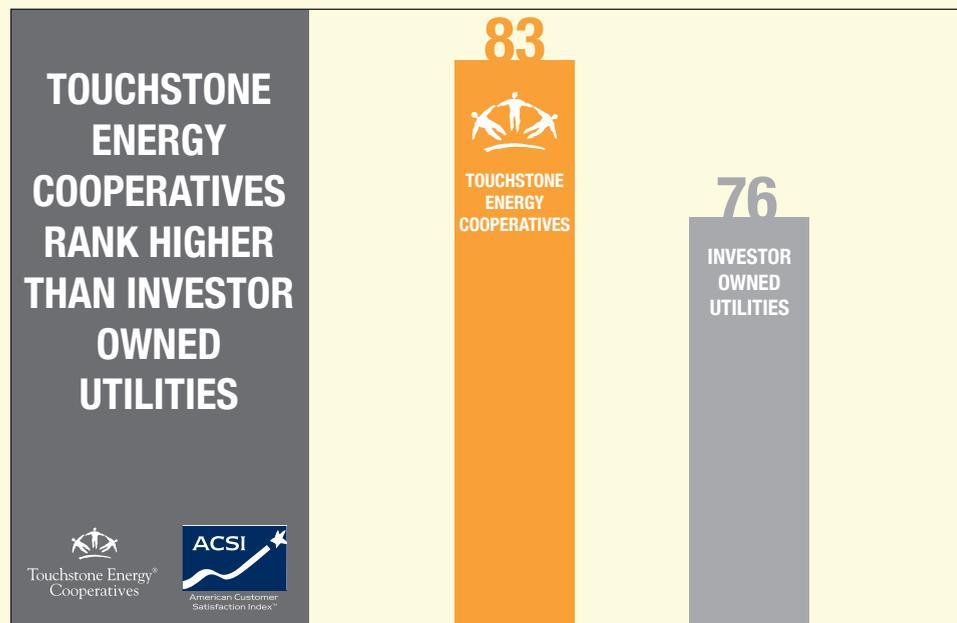
In the Pee Dee, *Living in South Carolina* reported, snow drifts in the highways reached heights of up to eight feet. Trucks and equipment



could not move on the roads. Neighboring Pee Dee Electric in Darlington used a helicopter to get linemen to harder-hit areas. "The men worked hour after hour trying to reach the areas affected by the outages," *Living* reported.

The kicker? That same winter eastern S.C. was also hit by a major ice storm. As co-op linemen like Blume will tell you, ice is worse than snow, by far: Frozen trees and limbs often strike power lines twice, first as they bend down and again springing up. "A lot of times you think you got 'em on [members' lights] and they'll shoot back up and hit the lines again," Blume says.

How would a blizzard- and hurricane-tested veteran advise co-op members today? "The biggest thing is to get prepared for it," Blume says. "It might be simple. It might be terrible."



In the third quarter of 2012, Touchstone Energy co-ops like Horry Electric Cooperative tied their all-time-high showing in the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), scoring an 83. That compares to an average of 76 for investor-owned utilities. As we reported in August, Touchstone Energy Cooperatives maintains a Best Practices Knowledge Base. Based on our Balanced Performance Scorecard, which enables co-ops to benchmark performance in mission-critical areas, Horry Electric was tapped as a best-in-class performer for earning top rank among cooperatives that participate in the reliability and cost metrics offered by the program.

## \$500 winner gives credit where it's due



**BARRY TODD** of Longs knows exactly whom to thank for the \$500 he won in a special drawing his electric co-op held Nov. 1. When *South Carolina Living* caught up with the busy owner of Todd's Welding and Machine Shop one evening

after Thanksgiving at a church on Highway 501, he agreed his good fortune was heaven-sent. "I know that's right!" Todd said.

He also credits his wife, Seina, who entered the drawing after stopping by the co-op's Conway office

back in October.

A co-op customer service representative had pointed out the drawing, a special promotion for the Power Touch outage reporting program.

As *Living* readers know well, due to the frequent

reminders here, Power Touch's effectiveness depends largely on the accuracy of the member account information on file at the co-op.

Telephone numbers are the key: When members call in to report an outage, Power Touch associates that number—and a cell number is fine!—with the service location. Having your current number helps co-op dispatchers get servicemen or crews there more quickly. ☺

**Don't be left in the dark. If you aren't sure we have your current phone number, call 369-2211 during regular business hours to check.**

### Do you have special medical needs?

#### If so, you need to let us know

Co-op members who have a health problem requiring use of special, electric-powered medical equipment should contact us as soon as possible to obtain a Special Needs Account Member Certification form.

Residential member-owners with such conditions will be required to secure the signature of a licensed health care provider on the form and then return it to the cooperative.

The certification is valid for 91 days from the date of the signature of the licensed health care provider. It is the responsibility of the member to renew certification by obtaining the appropriate signatures on a new certification form and submitting it to the cooperative.

Looking Out  
for You

### Doing his part

From the comfort of his lawn chair, Norman Lee douses the leaves his wife, Dottie, has raked into the ditch to burn at their home on Four Mile Road. "This is the only way I like to smoke," quipped the retired Army and Air Force veteran. The Lees, HEC members, were enjoying a mild Pearl Harbor Day (December 7) out of doors.

