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# Continuous Strategic Planning - *Value*

**H**ave you ever thought about the changing dynamics of words and concepts? With three grown children, Amy and I have realized how differently she and I think about some concepts as opposed to the views that our children's generation may have. For example, our concept of value; we all may consider similar aspects of what value is, but place different significance on them. Our goal as an electric cooperative is to understand your thoughts about the value of electricity, regardless of your generation.



So much of our lives revolve around the necessity of electricity—comfortable environments at home and work, appliances to keep our food cold or cook it while we're not even home, those that wash and dry our clothes, or the electronics that keep us connected with our family and friends or with the world at large. How does this influence what value we place on this service?

Here at CAEC, we concentrate on value as one of the cooperative's three major objectives in our continuous strategic planning process, and we evaluate the value of your electric service in numerous ways. We understand that for many, a primary consideration of value is related to cost. So when you think about the fact that you can maintain a wide range of ongoing activities in your home for a few dollars a day, is there value for you?

We also measure the value of your electric service in other ways. Are we delivering power in a safe and reliable manner? Are we offering you more choices, better products, programs, services and communication? Are we convenient, courteous and informative? When it comes to customer service and satisfaction, our employees strive to meet your need with each and every encounter.

Another measurement we use with value is how we work with our communities as it relates to economic development. Building healthy economies through our alliances with business and governmental leaders is at the foundation of economic development. When businesses and industries locate in our service territory, the economic impact can be phenomenal—jobs are created, and there's improved quality of life through the chain effect that occurs. Once again, we are committed to helping our communities grow and progress through a successful economic development plan.

As we collaborate with others on economic and community development, we also look to partner with you when it comes to our grassroots effort to communicate with Congress. From time to time we discuss the need to maintain a dialogue with our elected officials in an effort to keep electricity a good value; keeping it safe, reliable and affordable. Through our national association, the Action Committee for Rural Electrification (ACRE) allows you to join the dialogue—see page 43 for details.

Keeping electricity affordable is an important aspect of good value, but at CAEC we are committed to our members to maintain the level of service that you have come to expect from us every day through the process of continuous strategic planning. ■

Tom Stackhouse  
President/CEO

# High School Juniors: **Experience Leadership** Firsthand Through *Youth Tour*

**J**oin more than 1,500 of your fellow young leaders from across the country for a week in June 2014 as part of the annual NRECA Electric Cooperative Youth Tour in Washington, D.C. You will have the opportunity to visit with congressional representatives at the U.S. Capitol to share your perspective to elected officials and much more.



*2013 Alabama Delegation*

Each year, CAEC selects high school juniors from public, private or home schools to participate in three once-in-a-lifetime opportunities for leadership training: the Montgomery Youth Tour, the Youth Leadership Conference and the Washington Youth Tour. Each part of the Youth

Tour/Youth Leadership program offers lasting memories and experiences.

The following is a description of each Youth Tour activity.

## *Montgomery Youth Tour*

Learn more about our state's capital, government and history during a unique experience that allows you and students from across Alabama to tour state buildings, the Civil Rights Museum, the Rosa Parks Museum and more. You also get to meet state representatives and other elected officials and talk about issues that concern you.

## *Youth Leadership Conference*

Held at the 4-H Center in Columbiana, Ala., students participate in leadership exercises and learn about the many roles cooperatives play and how the cooperative business model makes an impact in today's world.

## *Washington Youth Tour*

A few applicants will be selected to fly to our nation's capital and tour monuments, federal buildings and other exciting landmarks. This is also a great opportunity to meet other youth leaders from across the country and members of your Congressional delegation.

To apply, download an application from our website ([www.caec.coop](http://www.caec.coop)) or contact us at (800) 545-5735, ext. 2125. ■

***Application Deadline is Dec. 6***

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## **Grants Available to Help Fund Classroom Projects**

**E**ducators influence children in so many positive and creative ways and helping them provide an excellent learning experience for students is something we're proud to be a part of. To assist teachers in getting the funding they need for materials and tools to advance their students' education, CAEC's Bright Ideas Grant Program gives \$16,000 annually to support valuable, hands-on initiatives and activities designed to stimulate students' imaginations and desire to learn. Bright Ideas grants assist teachers in public, private and home schools within CAEC's service area and are vital when limited school budgets often deter our teachers from sponsoring these innovative ideas.

Teams of teachers or individual teachers can apply for funding through a simple application process. Individual

teachers can apply for grants from \$250 to \$750, while teams of teachers are eligible for grants up to \$1,500. Just think what that could mean for your students.

Since 1998, CAEC has awarded approximately \$224,000 to local schools through the program. More than 91,400 students in all grade levels and subject areas have benefited from the Bright Ideas grants.

The deadline to submit an application is **Nov. 22, 2013**. For more information or an application, visit our website at [www.caec.coop](http://www.caec.coop) or call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2125.





## Community **Feature**

# Talladega County

**H**ikers, bikers, trailblazers, motorsports and water sports enthusiasts will love the variety of outdoor activities offered in Talladega County. The county is home to the Talladega Superspeedway, the Talladega National Forest and countless other fascinating locations.

Talladega County is located in the northeast central part of Alabama, consisting of more than 750 square miles. The area was created by an act of the Alabama General Assembly on Dec. 18, 1832, from land ceded by the Creek Indians in the Treaty of Cusseta.

There is no doubt that the Talladega Superspeedway, host to two National Association for Stock Car Racing (NASCAR) races each year in April and late October,



**Talladega Superspeedway**  
*Photo: Bob Crisp/The Daily Home*

is one of the most popular national and international attractions in the county. The Talladega Superspeedway is the largest race track in the NASCAR

circuit and is considered the most competitive motorsports facility in the world. Inaugurated in 1969, founder Bill France, Sr., helped create the track with the help of friend and political ally, Governor George Wallace. When the facility opened, it was named Alabama International Motor Speedway and later in 1989 adopted the name Talladega Superspeedway.

The facility is used year-round in many different ways. Automakers use the track to test cars for both speed and endurance; Alabama State Troopers and other law enforcement personnel use the track for high-speed pursuit and defensive-driving training.

Also founded by France in 1982, the International Motorsports Hall of Fame and Museum, adjacent to the Superspeedway, is dedicated to those who have contributed the most to the sport of auto racing either as a driver, owner, designer, rider or engineer and to preserve the

history of motorsports on a worldwide basis.

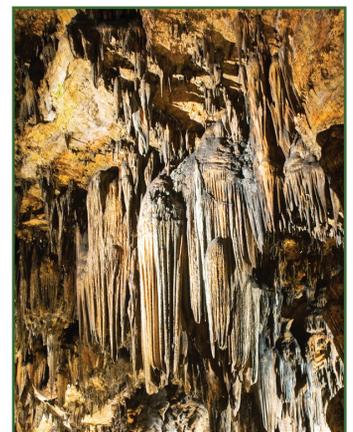
Talladega is also home to the first school for the blind in the state and one of the nation's most comprehensive educational programs for the deaf and blind, the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind (AIDB).

AIDB has provided education and outreach services to people with visual and hearing impairments since 1858. The organization consists of the Alabama School for the Deaf, the Alabama School for the Blind, the Helen Keller School of Alabama, the E.H. Gentry Technical Facility, nine regional centers and the Alabama Industries for the Blind. Today, the school continues to serve the needs of Alabamians from all around the state.

Another noteworthy attraction is Talladega College, a predominantly black institution, which was established in 1867 by two former slaves and is the oldest historically black college in the state.

For outdoor adventure, Talladega National Forest covers 375,000 acres at the southern edge of the Appalachians and connects to portions of Cheaha Wilderness and State Park which extends into Talladega County as one of the oldest state parks in Alabama. Mount Cheaha, the highest point in the state at 2,407 feet above sea level, offers dramatic views of the woodlands of the surrounding Talladega National Forest and appeals to hikers from all over the Southeast. The Pinhoti Trail is a long-distance hiking trail (334.9 miles) with 171.2 miles in Alabama and 163.7 miles in Georgia and the Odum Scout Trail is recognized as one of the most beautiful hiking trails in America.

Proclaimed the oldest continually occupied city in America, Childersburg abounds with Indian culture and traditions and has served as the campsite and home of pioneer settlers, conquistadors and American Indians.



**DeSoto Caverns**  
**Stalactite formations**  
*Photo: Courtesy of DeSoto Caverns Park*

Resting at the foot of the Appalachian Mountains is DeSoto Caverns, the first officially recorded cave in the U. S. The caverns are decorated with thousands of stalactite and stalagmite formations, making it one of the most concentrated collections of such specimens in the country. Additionally, its 30-foot long onyx draperies are among the largest known free-hanging formations anywhere. The cave has a long and fascinating history, and in 1965, archeologists from the University of Alabama discovered a 2,000-year-old Native American burial ground.

During the 1940s, Childersburg experienced enormous growth when the United States Army located an ammunition plant there. The Alabama Army Ammunition Plant employed a workforce of more than 25,000 people and its primary products were TNT and gunpowder, used in the production of ammunition. Construction began in April of 1941 – before Pearl Harbor – and the plant continued operations until the end of World War II.

The Kymulga Grist Mill and Covered Bridge are also of significant historical and educational value. The mill and bridge are more than 140 years old and are the only pair of such structures in Alabama that still stand where they were originally built on Talladega Creek. The mill is still in operation making white and yellow cornmeal, grits and sorghum syrup.



**Kymulga Bridge**  
Photo: Bob Crisp/ *The Daily Home*

Referred to as the “Marble City,” Sylacauga sits atop a bed of the finest white marble in the world. The marble seam is estimated by geologists to be 32 miles long, a mile and a half wide and 400 feet deep. The purity of this marble is such that it is ground to powder and used in products ranging from chewing gum and toothpaste

to paper and paint. Beautiful buildings such as the U.S. Supreme Court and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., and the Department of Archives and History in Montgomery are constructed with Sylacauga marble. Currently there are three marble companies located in the Sylacauga area: Imerys, the largest producer of calcium/carbonate products in the world, Omya, Inc., an international producer and Alabama Marble Company, the only producer of dimensional marble for artistic use (sculpting) as well as marble for building construction. The Alabama legislature declared marble as the official State Rock in 1969.



**Imerys Gantt's Quarry Observation Point**  
Photo: Jerry Martin

Each year, Sylacauga hosts the Annual Marble Festival to recreate the magic of marble through its artistic, commercial and industrial applications. The next event is scheduled for April 8-19, 2014.

Sylacauga is also well respected by cyclists, hikers and anglers for the activities available at Lake Howard, a 180-acre, deep-water lake nestled in the foothills of the Talladega National Forest. And the Sylaward Trail at Lake Howard is a 14.5-mile biking and hiking trail that is catching the attention of outdoorsy types throughout the Southeast.

Talladega County is home to many historical small towns bordered by the national forest, with more than 60 beautiful lakes to enjoy and numerous trails to venture out and explore. ■

*Sources: The Heritage of Talladega County/Alabama, Encyclopedia of Alabama, Talladega City Chamber of Commerce, Sylacauga City Chamber of Commerce, Childersburg City Chamber of Commerce*

# Campus Electrical Safety



*Darren Maddox,  
Manager Training  
and Safety*

**T**housands of college students have moved from home and have started the fall semester living either in a residence hall, off-campus housing or a fraternity or sorority house, and it is important they learn about electrical safety. Today's college student uses many electronics for school, work and play. When used improperly, these helpful devices can become electrical hazards.

It's not uncommon for certain student housing to lack the outlets to plug in all gadgets at once. Often times, students plug in all of the typical college tools – laptops, TV's, stereos, dorm refrigerators, cordless phones, irons, toasters, coffee makers and other electrical devices – unaware of the potential dangers. Rather than risk an accident, students need to be educated on safe appliance and electronics use.

Here are important safety guidelines to help reduce the risk of electrical fires in student housing:

- Purchase and use only electrical appliances and power cords which have been tested by Underwriter Laboratories (UL) and other nationally recognized testing labs.
- Do not overload extension cords, power strips or outlets.
- Never tack or nail an electrical cord to any surface, or run cords across traffic paths, under rugs or furniture.
- Keep all electrical appliances and cords safely away from bedding, window treatments and other flammable material.
- Never use extension cords on a continuous basis; they serve as temporary solutions only.
- Use power strips with an over-current protector that will shut off power automatically if there is too much current being drawn.

- Use light bulbs with the correct wattage for lamps; if no indication is on the fixture, do not use a bulb with more than 60 watts.
- Discard or repair damaged electronics. It may be tempting to use an electronic with a frayed cord or damaged plug-in to save money, however, damaged electronics should not be used since they can shock or electrocute.
- Notify campus staff or the landlord if lights flicker, or electronics and circuits shut off.
- Watch out for an electrical outlet that becomes so hot you cannot leave your hand on it, there is potential for a fire. Unplug everything from the outlet and notify the landlord or dorm officials immediately.
- Smoke detectors should never be disabled, nor should fire alarms ever be ignored or taken casually as a drill. If a fire alarm sounds, residents should calmly and quickly follow practice procedures and immediately exit the building.



There are approximately 3,800 university housing fires every year – one fire per U.S. campus. It is important that both on- and off-campus students understand fire risks associated with electrical gadgets and know the preventative measures, including escape and meeting plans, which could save their lives. ■



# Recipe for *Efficiency* from CAEC

## Window Weather Stripping

**H**ow many windows are on your home? Did you know each window can represent a giant hole when it comes to keeping your home efficient? Cracks and spaces in the sash of your windows can allow outside

air into your home, causing you to lose your climate controlled air. Weather stripping your windows is a simple and efficient way to help close this gap.

### Utensils (tools):

Scissors  
Tape Measure

Soap  
Water

### Ingredients (supplies):

Self-adhesive foam insulation



1. Clean bottom of the window sash (the part of the window frame with the glass panes) with soap and water and let dry.

2. Measure the length of the sash with the tape measure.



3. With the scissors, cut the foam weather-stripping to the same length as the window sash.

4. Firmly press the adhesive side of the foam weather-stripping to the bottom of the sash.



5. Peel the back from the foam (this backing keeps the foam from sticking to itself while in the package).



6. Close the window and lock it to ensure a tight seal.

*By adding extra insulation to your windows with weather stripping, you can keep cold drafts and hot air from infiltrating the climate controlled air in your home—leading to increased comfort and energy savings.*

# How much are *you* willing to pay for *your* power???

Decisions are being made in Washington that could affect your power bill...

For the nation's electric cooperatives, green power is not a new idea. In fact, approximately 700 of the more than 900 co-ops in the country have offered renewable energy options to their memberships for decades.

To hear the current national debate, however, one might think that politicians in Washington, D.C., are the only ones concerned with being green. While they discuss increasing our nation's green power production, are they keeping its cost in mind? Cooperative members are working together to make sure there's a balanced approach when it comes to this national debate.

Want to help us keep the cost of energy in front of Congress? You can – by joining the 30,000+ individuals already working together on the Action Committee for Rural Electrification® (ACRE). Membership in ACRE Co-op Owners for Political Action® is easy, and for a couple of dollars a month, you can have a great impact on an important dialogue. Simply give us a call at (800) 545-5735. After you join, your electric bill will display a monthly ACRE membership fee of \$2.08.



Central Alabama  
Electric Cooperative

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Complete form and mail to: CAEC, P.O. Box 681570 Prattville, AL 36068

**Yes!** Enroll me in ACRE so that MY voice can be heard in our nation's capital!

I understand a low membership fee of \$2.08 will be added to my monthly electric bill.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Account Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_