

Guest Column - *Creating Relationships with Leaders*



Michael Forst
Youth Tour
Alum 08-09'

I proudly display two pictures on my desk at home--each commemorating times in my life most important to me. One is of my family crowding around our dog, Madison, in the snow on a cold Arkansas Christmas Eve and the other shows my NRECA Youth Tour family posing with Senator


Jeff Sessions in Washington, D.C. Snapshots of two great memories, experienced with two exceptionally inspiring groups.

My lifelong indebtedness to the state's cooperative system began unknowingly during a night of interviews at CAEC's headquarters-- interviews I nearly didn't attend due to an English test the following morning. But I heeded my high school guidance counselor's advice, sacrificed some study time and spent the evening with 10 other students being introduced to the world of electric co-ops. These students would become my friends during the statewide Montgomery Youth Tour the following March, where we spent three exciting days with students from across the state participating in engaging leadership training and touring the sites of our state's capital. We even had the opportunity for an afternoon of interacting with State Representatives and Senators on the capitol building lawn.

In June, with my fellow Alabama delegates during the Washington Youth Tour (WYT), it was apparent I was being given the opportunity to cre-

ate friendships with some of the strongest leaders throughout the state-- leaders I have crossed paths with during my young college career. Since entering college they've achieved success in the Miss Alabama pageant, been elected SGA Senators at the University of Alabama and distinguished themselves as leaders within the world of community service. These titles represent only a sampling of the impressive accolades received by Youth Tour alumni with whom I am fortunate enough to have formed relationships.

Following the WYT, I was awarded the honor of serving as Alabama's delegate to the annual NRECA Youth Leadership Council (YLC) Conference in Washington, D.C., and the Annual Meeting in New Orleans. While in Washington, the YLC met with every branch of the NRECA's operations to learn the complete world of cooperative business, met with national lobbyists, scoured maps of renewable energy programs and held a session with NRECA CEO Glenn English. As was expected, the knowledge gained did not fall on deaf ears, but instead inspired us to convey what we had learned about co-ops to others upon our return home.

I feel confident speaking for each student who has benefited from the electric cooperative's youth programs when I stress the endless thanks owed to members of our co-op who make such experiences a possibility. Rarely a program comes along with the power to educate students while simultaneously changing their world view and creating lasting friendships - the Rural Electric Youth Tours brilliantly accomplishes all three. 

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High School Juniors

Enhance Your Leadership Skills

For more than four decades, electric cooperatives have sponsored high school students from across America to visit the nation's capital and meet their members of Congress. Would you like to be a part of this incredible opportunity?

Each year, CAEC selects high school juniors from private, public or home schools to participate in three distinctive and exciting opportunities: 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.

Students with the following qualifications will be selected to compete:

- Junior in high school
- Have a 2.5 GPA or higher
- Demonstrate active interest in community, civic and extracurricular activities
- Show an interest in developing leadership skills through a brief writing assignment
- Be members of CAEC or attend a school in CAEC's service territory

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) or contact us at (800) 545-5735, ext. 2125. 



Application Deadline is Nov. 11

A “Bright Idea” Could Be Worth \$1,500

Do you have a bright idea for a classroom project that will leave a lasting impression on your students? Our state’s educators are often challenged to budget their limited funds with finding creative ways to teach their students. But with assistance from Central Alabama Electric Cooperative’s (CAEC) Bright Ideas Grant Program, now in its 13th consecutive year, 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.

As a program that strives to support innovative, creative and effective initiatives not usually covered by traditional school funding, Bright Ideas grants assist teachers in public, private and home schools within CAEC’s service area.

“Many educators are finding it hard to cover the costs of basic supplies needed for their classrooms let alone imaginative projects that can impact our students for years to come,” said CAEC President and CEO Tom Stackhouse. “We are honored to offer a program to help our future leaders gain the education they need today.”

To date, CAEC has awarded approximately \$192,000 to local schools through the program. More than 79,300 students in all grade levels and subject areas have benefited from the Bright Ideas grants.

The deadline for an application is Oct. 28. For more information or an application, visit our website at www.caec.coop or call 800-545-5735 ext. 2125. ☎

**Information sheet for your teacher is on page 35.*



*Deadline for Bright Ideas
Grant Applications
is Oct. 28*

Basic Math

Energy Efficiency Equates to Lower Power Bills

Cooling and heating costs are usually the largest portion of a home energy bill. One of the main culprits robbing you of energy dollars is air leaks in the home.

If you added together all the small cracks and holes in your home, you might find they let in as much hot or cold air as a small open window. It's important to eliminate loss caused by air leaks. You can weatherize your home by caulking and weather stripping. Weatherizing takes a few relatively inexpensive materials and some time; and the pay-back period is usually within one season. As late fall ushers in cooler weather, it's a good time to address some of the easier, more inexpensive energy-saving projects around the house.

Caulking

Building materials, such as wood and plaster, expand and contract with changes in temperature and moisture. As this happens, cracks and openings may occur in both interior and exte-


rior walls. These areas need to be caulked; or if caulk is already present, it may have hardened and needs to be replaced. Your main concern when selecting caulk is how well it will bond to the surface. Caulk and seal air leaks where

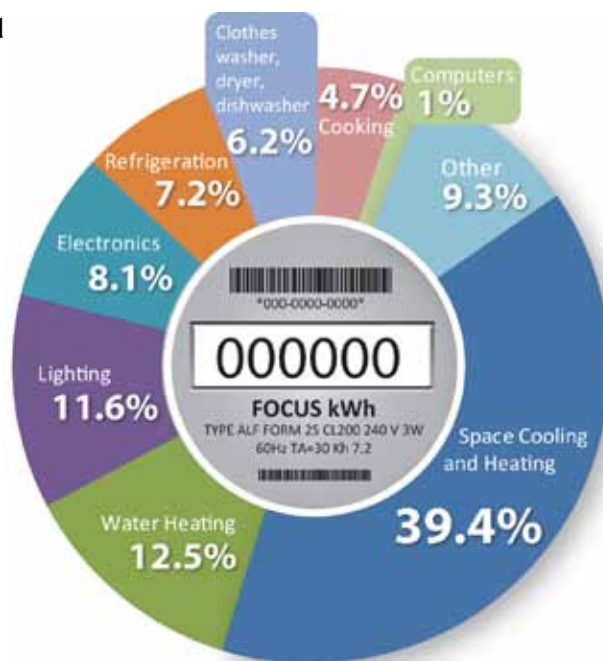
plumbing, ducts or electrical wires penetrate the exterior walls, floors and ceilings. Caulking is available in a variety of forms, so select the caulk best suited for the part of the house you are improving.

Weather Stripping

Like caulking, weather stripping is a low-cost way to cut energy costs. Weather stripping is applied to joints where two surfaces meet and move relative to each

other, such as windows and doors. Properly installed, it provides an air-tight seal eliminating air drafts. An example of how to weather strip your windows can be found on page 34.

These two simple steps can help you prepare your home for cooler weather - saving energy, lowering your energy bills, all the while keeping you and your family more comfortable. 



U.S. Department of Energy

To identify the air leaks inside your home, CAEC provides a residential energy efficiency audit service which includes an infrared camera to detect leaks and a "blower door test" in the advanced audit. For more information, visit www.caec.coop or call 1-800-545-5735, ext. 2178.

Educating Our Youth About Electrical Safety

Children are often oblivious to the dangers around them, including the possibility of contacting power lines or equipment. For this reason, CAEC offers an Electric Safety Education Program for school classrooms and civic/community groups to provide safety messages through a stimulating and entertaining display.

This summer, CAEC employees presented a safety education program to more than 75 children attending the Boys and Girls Club of Prattville, ranging from ages five to 15. The presentation takes children through the world of the main characters, Neon Leon and Lightnin' Liz, where real electricity interacts with the "neon" residents to show the importance of "be aware" and "beware" with electrical equipment. The show included demonstrations of overhead power lines coming in contact with farm equipment or a tree branch, the danger of digging around underground power lines and a hot dog that simulates what happens when a person touches a live power line.

"Teaching children about being safe around electricity is important," said Michael Longcrier, Line Inspector and safety and education presenter. "They are eager to learn and they take their enthusiasm and important safety information home to their parents."



Stettler and Longcrier demonstrate the safety education program.



Longcrier and Stettler explain the safety measures required when utilizing the bucket truck.

CAEC also showcases a bucket truck to discuss the safety measures our employees take when working with equipment or restoring power to members.

"When the public witnesses our employees wearing safety glasses, gloves, sleeves, hardhats, boots and other personal protection equipment, it serves as a reminder that they should not tamper with electrical equipment," said Ted Stettler, Substation Technician and safety and education presenter.

"The program was very educational and full of information about electricity safety," said Rodney Davis, Club Athletic Director. "I encourage our community to take advantage of this demonstration for the safety of our children."

A modified safety program is also available for adult civic and community groups or high school students. All safety programs are available at no charge.

If you would like to learn more about our electrical Safety Education Program or want to schedule a demonstration at no cost, call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2214. ☎

***CAEC Offices will be closed Monday, Sept. 5
for Labor Day***



Recipe for *Efficiency* from CAEC

Window Weather Stripping

How 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.

A \$16,000 Investment in Area Schools...

...Think of the Possibilities



How could \$16,000 help children in the classroom? The Bright Ideas Grant program from Central Alabama Electric Cooperative gives teachers the chance to explore the possibilities.

CAEC has given \$16,000 in grants each year to support innovative, creative and effective initiatives that cannot be covered by traditional funding. Designed for K-12 teachers in public, private and home schools within CAEC's territory, the program has given approximately \$192,000 benefiting more than 79,300 students since its inception in 1998.

Teams of teachers and individual teachers are eligible to apply for the grant monies. Individuals are eligible to apply for grants from \$250 to \$750, while teams are able to apply for up to \$1,500.

Don't miss this opportunity for your child's classroom. Mention CAEC's Bright Ideas grant program to your child's teacher or cut off the information below and have your child present it to his or her teacher.

(Cut here and give this reminder to your teacher)

Receive up to \$750 for your classroom. Please contact CAEC about their Bright Ideas Grant Program.

CAEC offers teachers up to \$750 for classroom projects. Teams of teachers can receive up to \$1,500. Call (334) 351-2125/(800) 545-5735 ext. 2125 or e-mail trueblood@coop.caec.com for more information.

Applications available at www.caec.coop

Deadline is Oct. 28, 2011