

Working Together For Success



Pioneer of the automotive industry, Henry Ford once said, “Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

This statement is true for many aspects of our lives. On a personal level, I’ve witnessed the countless hours of volunteer work by CAEC employees—working to serve their communities (learn more about some of these employees on pages 6-7).

In the electric cooperative world, it also takes teamwork to better serve our national community of 42 million members across 47 states with lines covering 75 percent of the country’s landmass. Having a network of co-ops allows us to pool our resources to gain strength and efficiency. On the state level, Alabama Rural Electric Association (AREA) brings together the assets of 22 cooperatives and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) helps organize the efforts of more than 860 co-ops across the country.

Just as volunteers lend a hand to those in need, co-ops help those who require assistance during trying times—often during a weather event that has caused substantial outages. In 2009, CAEC sent nine line workers to assist Kentucky electric cooperatives during a massive ice storm. Co-ops were contacted, organized and sent to assist in restoring power to more than 650,000 members. We also benefitted from this same teamwork in

2004, when 1,000 workers from 14 states gathered in Alabama after Hurricane Ivan left power outages in every county. Both recovery efforts were daunting, but were completed in a timelier manner due to the nationwide network of cooperatives who work together before, during and after a storm.

Helping others is a job without borders and there are still many areas of our world that do not enjoy the everyday conveniences of electricity that we may take for granted. For 45 years, NRECA’s International Foundation has provided people in developing countries with access to safe, reliable and affordable electricity. Last October, four CAEC employees traveled to Guatemala to aid in this electrification program (you can read about their experience in the October 2010 issue of *Alabama Living*) and we already have employees signed up to participate in 2011. Through this effort, the program has provided power to more than 100 million people, leading to increased agricultural productivity, millions of new jobs and higher incomes and quality of life for rural communities around the world.

By incorporating the concept of coming together, staying together and working together, not only can we help those in need, we can also achieve our number one goal of providing reliable and affordable service to our members. 

Tom Stackhouse, President/CEO

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Collectively We Can Help Control Wholesale Power Costs

Members can help impact CAEC's wholesale power rate by shaving peak energy use

While many of us have become more aware of our energy usage and have tried to improve our efficiency, there are times we've all forgotten to turn off a light before leaving a room or left our televisions and phone chargers plugged in when they were not in use. But what if there were a way you could have an impact on costs by doing nothing at all?

Through CAEC's Peak Shaving Program (PSP), members can minimize the amount of power they use during high energy use periods, when many people are using electricity at one time. These peak-times typically occur in the mornings when everyone is getting ready for the day and in the afternoons when families return home from work and school.

In order to handle the energy needs of our members at these peak times, large and expensive peaking power plants have to be built. Without these plants, we'd have rolling blackouts during the coldest and hottest times of the year.

The program currently targets water heaters, which use approximately 14 percent of a home's annual electricity usage. A peak shaving device (PSD) is installed for a member's electric water heater and reduces energy usage during peak times by delaying the reheating cycle to non-

peak times. You still have hot water when you need it while helping to reduce our peak energy needs—which cost millions of dollars to fulfill.

CAEC started with a goal of installing 1,000 devices each year, and we have met that goal with approximately 3,000 installed devices to date. This accomplishment brings

us closer to our five year goal of having 5,000 PSDs installed. CAEC, along with six other cooperatives who also receive electricity from PowerSouth, our wholesale power supplier, have offset wholesale power costs by nearly \$220,000!

Through this partnership, the cooperatives want to reach an overall goal of 50,000 PSDs installed by the year 2016, eliminating the need to build an additional peaking plant which can cost at least \$200 million.

How Does the Program Work?

- Let CAEC know you want to participate in the free Peak Shaving Program. Call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2118 or fill out the form on page 34 of this magazine and mail it in.
- Those who participate also qualify for a water heater rebate.
- The peak shaving device (PSD) is installed by a licensed electrician at no cost to you.
- You still have hot water when you need it; the reheating process is just delayed to off-peak times.

If you have questions about CAEC's Peak Shaving Program or would like to help us reach our goal by signing up, call (800) 545-5735, ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118. You can also fill out the form on page 34 in the back of this magazine and mail it in or drop it by one of our service centers.

By working together, we can make a difference.



Helping Their Communities

With a large service area, CAEC employees call a number of towns and cities home. While they may all come from different backgrounds, one thing many hold in common is the desire to better their communities by giving their time and effort to help others. Here are just a few of those employees and their stories.

Hunt of a Lifetime

Each year during January, Autauga Academy holds a Winter Hunt as a fundraiser for the school. Located on AA Lodge in Autaugaville, Ala., hunters come with dreams of bagging a big buck while helping the local school. But each year, there are also some select hunters who don't pay to hunt and still leave with the experience of a lifetime.

For the last 10 years, Wade Chandler, CAEC Manager of Plant and Facilities, has served as guide to these VIP hunters whose one desire is to experience the great outdoors and the feel of the hunt.

"We wanted to design a program that allowed young, disabled hunters come hunt on the ranch at no cost to them or their families," said Chandler. "A lot of these kids haven't been able to enjoy hunting—it's something a lot of us take for granted, and it's the



Chandler and Tyler Templeton show off the young hunter's 8-point buck

one thing these kids have always wanted to do but couldn't."

For one to three days, young hunters with disabilities are guided on hunts, usually by Chandler. He assists them in loading their equipment into vehicles and taking them to deer blinds in hopes of lining up that once in a lifetime shot. Once set up, the hunters (some of whom may be paraplegic) bring equipment that makes it possible for them to aim and shoot a gun.

"There's nothing like it—it's indescribable to see their faces from when they first see a deer to when they realize that they made the kill," he

said. "It's an emotional experience and I fell in love with it. I'd rather take these amazing young people out there than anyone else."

After the hunt, any bucks that are taken are mounted for the young hunters free of charge and shipped to them. If a hunter doesn't make a kill, they are invited back the next year—again free of charge.

"It all comes down to making someone's wish come true and to give an opportunity to those who wouldn't normally have it," Chandler said. "It's my favorite part of the season and I wouldn't have it any other way."

Answering the Call

When it's 3 a.m., raining and a call comes in over the radio, CAEC Customer Service Representative Allison Ellison knows that there's a good chance she's going to have to get out in the elements to help a person she may not even know.

As a member of the Union Grove Volunteer Fire Department for the past 10 years, Ellison is ready, day or night, to help those in her community and surrounding areas with medical and fire calls.

"I was born into it I guess you could say," said the first responder. "My mom was an EMT/firefighter and my grandparents were both volunteers. So when I was of age, becoming a firefighter and helping my community was something I was ready to do."

Responding to almost 200 calls a year, she is ready to answer a call, 24-hours a day, seven days a week. Sometimes it's responding to an elderly person who has no one else to call or someone



Ellison's desire to help others is a family tradition

who just needs someone to talk to—but sometimes it’s something more serious.

“The tragedies can get to you,” Ellison said. “Bad car accidents or responding to a call where someone has passed away is never easy. But you’re there to help the family and do what you can to make a terrible situation a little less painful. Knowing you’re doing what you can to help others really makes it all worth it, no matter how bad things may seem.”

Feeding the Soul

In 1982, Charlie DeBardelaben was invited by Richard Bland to attend a church service at Elmore Correctional Center being held by United Prison Ministries International. Since that introduction, he has gone back to the center—working to make a difference in the lives of others.

“The Lord can change people, and this allows us

to provide prisoners with an opportunity to make a choice on how they want to live,” said the CAEC Warehouse Technician. “By feeding their souls, we can have a positive impact on their actions, both in and out of the correctional facility.”

For two hours each Friday, DeBardelaben and several other members of the Prison Ministry hold Bible studies with prisoners and offer a church service once a month. From those convicted of murder to theft, they speak to anyone who wants to hear the message they deliver.

During his 24 years serving in the program full-time, DeBardelaben has seen lives changed. When released, some prisoners return and help lead the Prison Ministry, while others go back to their communities to help others avoid the same mistakes they made - and DeBardelaben takes credit for none of it.



Seeing a positive impact in the lives of others is what drives DeBardelaben

“I’m just an instrument being used to help others in their time of need,” he said. “When people help each other out, they’re helping their communities. And that’s something we can all gather strength and benefit from—it’s just the natural thing to do.”

Lending A Paw

Twice a month, a mixed breed dog named Duncan anxiously awaits the chance to go with owner and CAEC Communications Specialist Tiffany Trueblood to make some very special visits. As a member of the PAWS (Pets Are Wonderful Support) team, Duncan and Trueblood visit area nursing and assisted living facilities spreading a little furry cheer to those they meet.

“We began participating in this program four years ago, it seemed like something Duncan was born to do, he loves people and loves to be petted,” she said. “Little did I know how much it would also mean to me—getting to know the residents and seeing their faces light up when the dogs visit, it’s an amazing feeling.”

The purpose of PAWS is to bring smiles and laughter to the everyday routine, promote physical and emotional well-being, encourage communication and satisfy the basic human need to physically touch and be touched through the age-old bond between people and pets.

“There are residents who don’t have any family close by,

so they really look forward to our visits,” said Trueblood. “Sometimes they want a person to talk to and other times they just need to pet the dogs and reminisce about their own pets. Either way, we’re there to meet both needs whether it’s with two legs or four paws.”



Trueblood and her trusty side-kick, Duncan, bring smiles to those they visit.

Employee Spotlight: Administrative and Executive Services

By working together this team supports CAEC's Management, Executives and the Board of Trustees.

As the reliance on technology continues to expand in offices, the role of the office professional has greatly evolved. Administrative and executive assistants are increasingly assuming responsibilities once reserved for managerial staff in conjunction with performing a variety of organizational and clerical duties necessary to run a business efficiently.

This three member team is comprised of one Executive Assistant and two Administrative Assistants. Working together, they aid the CEO, Vice Presidents, staff and 10 Board Members in many ways.



The Executive Assistant provides administrative, clerical and secretarial support to the CEO and trustees of the co-op, heads several committees,

and supervises the two Administrative Assistants. Tasks include dispersing information to trustees, coordinating and scheduling training for the Board and CEO as well as the monthly responsibilities that are associated with each Board meeting. During the meeting itself, she records the details of the minutes.

"There's a good deal of work before and after each monthly Board meeting," said Executive Assistant Jennifer Blackmon. "It requires working with each division to prepare the information needed by the Board so they can conduct the cooperative's business."

Support for planning and running the board meeting is provided by Administrative Assistants Jennifer Cox and Ashley Easterling. This administrative "pool" consisting of Cox and Easterling is designed to provide support not only to the Executive Assistant and Vice Presidents, but the staff as well by making daily operations more efficient. Duties include preparing correspondence, contracts, memorandum and reports; maintaining monthly and yearly reports and spreadsheets; coordinating training, departmental meetings and conferences for cooperative personnel; keeping up with expenses and invoices; organizing and preparing meetings and events; maintaining and stocking supplies for CAEC's service centers; and providing backup assistance to CSRs as needed.

"By assisting each other, we can lighten the load for times when work is more than one person can handle," said Cox. And by the same token, when one division may be more active than another, requiring more assistance, division employees can draw from the Assistants to successfully complete the tasks at hand.



"With the varying departments and responsibilities of each, you never know what the day may bring," said Easterling. "There are so many things we do, from large to small, which can have a big impact on daily operations." 

CAEC Offices will be closed Feb. 21 for President's Day

Enjoy a Hot Shower and Help Control Costs at the Same Time



By having a CAEC Peak Shaving Device installed on your electric water heater, you'll still have hot water when you need it, while helping the cooperative reduce its need to pay for peak-time power costs.

If enough people join this effort, we can have a positive effect on our future rates – will you join us?

The peak shaving device for your electric hot water heater is free, and will be installed by a licensed electrician at no cost to you just by submitting the form below.

To learn more about this program, visit our website, www.caec.coop.

Yes, I agree to do my part by joining CAEC's peak shaving program.

Name: _____ Phone #(s): _____

Address: _____ City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Account #: _____

Email: _____

Number & Size(s) of Water Heater(s): _____



Mail form to: Central Alabama Electric Cooperative, P.O. Box 681570, Prattville, AL 36068

HEATING SYSTEM

Your heating costs represent about 50-60 percent of your monthly electric bill.

SAVE Energy the Easy Way...

- ▶ Clean or replace filters monthly or as needed.
- ▶ Have your heating system professionally checked and serviced. A well-maintained heating system will run more efficiently, use less energy and lower energy bills.
- ▶ Don't block heating registers. Blocked air vents and registers reduce airflow and make your unit run longer, adding to your monthly bill.
- ▶ Run ceiling fans in reverse mode. Reversing the direction of ceiling fans helps push warm air down from the ceiling during the winter.



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Conserve101... Conserving today means saving tomorrow.