

A Sustainable Future

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It was 1945 when we got electricity at my parents' home in Chilton County — that was an exciting event on the farm. I have been farming in Chilton County all my life, more than 56 years, and when you think of the many challenges that agriculture faces, you can easily understand the importance of sustainability. Sustainability is important because all the options we pursue and the actions we take today affect our future.

As a CAEC board member since 1999 and Vice Chairman, it is easy to understand why one of the core goals identified in our continuous strategic plan is sustainability.

Every day employees at CAEC arrive at work with one clear objective, “to keep the lights on” for our members. To achieve this goal, the co-op invests in technology to give employees the tools to perform daily tasks effectively, while offering training, development and leadership growth as part of our strategic plan. Another objective in the plan is to examine bylaws and policies to ensure their relevancy as they take CAEC into the future. And even though the future of our economy is unpredictable, our strategy also includes developing tactics on how to accomplish everyday tasks while considering different economic scenarios. Becoming even more engaged with the members and making sure our financial plans are sound are all steps designed to make our business more sustainable, which will help us become better business partners to those communities we serve.

In addition to farming, I was in banking for 20 years – gaining extensive knowledge about the financial aspect of successfully operating a business. CAEC is tasked with being stewards of the members' money, ensuring our co-op's long-term financial viability. The co-op is a not-for-profit organization, owned by its members, and operating at cost by receiving only enough revenue to run and expand the cooperative with no need to raise rates for the purpose of generating profits. The revenue over and above the cost of doing business is considered margins. These margins represent operating capital received from those who use the service, which in turn is your equity, or ownership, of the cooperative. This equity (or capital) represents investments in infrastructure, such as poles, wires, transformers, meters, trucks and other equipment. Capital credits is your portion of the members' equity. The release of capital credits is a member benefit unique to cooperatives and is also a true measurement of good financial planning in the use of member funds. I am a firm believer that the investment we give back to our members is the right thing to do.

In the center of this magazine is a listing of unclaimed capital credits for energy used during 1983 through 1986. If you recognize anyone on the list, advise them to get in touch with us so they may receive their capital credit dollars.

Our mission at CAEC has always been to provide safe, reliable and affordable electricity in a socially responsible manner to all our members. We know that the actions we take today will have a great impact on the future of the co-op and are critical to achieving our sustainability goals. ■



CAEC Trustee
Jimmie Harrison, Jr.
District 6
Vice Chairman

CAEC Products and Services

CAEC offers many products and services to help you save money by taking control of your energy use. Listed below are some of the programs and services we offer for your convenience. Visit www.caec.coop or call (800) 545-5735 for more information.

Water Heater Rebate Program

CAEC offers rebates for water heaters. Purchase your new water heater from any retailer and receive a rebate for meeting the following criteria:



- Only electric water heaters (cannot be tankless)
- Minimum energy factor of .92
- Participation in CAEC's Peak Shaving Program

Water heaters will be inspected to verify the following:

- Installation at member's address
- Manufacturer's Information: Name, model and serial #
- Proof of purchase: Copy of receipt, store name and spec information

Rebates are available in the following amounts:

- Under 80 gal: up to \$235
- 80 gal & up: up to \$375

For more information about our rebate program, call (800) 545-5735 ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118.

Heat Pump Rebate Program

CAEC offers rebates on high efficiency air-to-air heat pumps, dual fuel systems and geothermal units for both standard and manufactured homes. The minimum SEER rating allowed is 15 on standard homes or if a manufactured home is switching from a furnace to a heat pump, a 13 SEER rating will be allowed.

For more information about our rebate program, call (800) 545-5735 ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118.

Peak Shaving Program

CAEC's wholesale power costs are determined by our members' highest, or peak, electricity usage for a particular day and can affect your rates for the whole year if that usage is extremely high. But there is something you can do through CAEC's Peak Shaving Program.

This effort targets electric water heaters, which can use approximately 18 percent of your home's annual energy.

By participating in this program you also qualify for an electric water heater rebate; details are listed under "Water Heater Rebate Program."

For more information, visit www.caec.coop or call (800) 545-5735 ext. 2118 or (334) 351-2118.

Home Energy Audit

When you have a home energy audit conducted by CAEC's Energy Services Representative, a Certified Residential Energy Auditor, you can choose which level works best for you and your budget.

Learn how to make your home more energy efficient with an energy audit. For more information, visit www.caec.coop or call (800) 545-5735 ext. 2178 or (334) 351-2178.

Co-op Connections Card

From prescriptions to hotel reservations, start saving now. The Co-op Connections Card allows you to take advantage of discounts offered on all types of services and products from participating local and national businesses. An updated list with new businesses can be found in next month's *Alabama Living* magazine or visit our website www.caec.coop for the most current list.

Your card also provides a valuable prescription drug discount at participating pharmacies. In addition to the prescription drug discount, the card has added benefits from Healthy Savings Discounts, which offers savings on dental, vision, chiropractic, hearing, lab work and imaging visits. To find a provider near you who honors these discounts, visit www.connections.coop and click on the Healthy Savings tab.



Learn about these products or services and more at www.caec.coop

Lowndes County

Known as a vital part of the march for voting equality in 1965, today Lowndes County hosts a site commemorating the Selma to Montgomery March and is home to the oldest arts and crafts event in the state, the Calico Fort Arts and Crafts Fair, along with much more.

Lowndes County was established by an act of the Alabama General Assembly on Jan. 20, 1830. The county was formed from parts of Montgomery, Dallas and Butler counties. The section taken from Butler County



Exhibit at The Lowndes
County Interpretive Center

was later added to Crenshaw County, giving Lowndes County its final dimensions. The county was named in honor of William Lowndes, a U.S. congressman from South Carolina. The earliest settlers

came to the county from Georgia and Tennessee.

Through the civil rights era of the 1960s, Lowndes County was at the forefront of efforts to reform voting rights and other areas of racial injustice in the South. The Lowndes County Freedom Organization (later named the Black Panther Party), founded by local activists and former members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, banded together to push for the passage of stronger federal legislation that would protect the voting rights of racial minorities.

Serving as a reservoir of information and to honor the legacy of the Selma to Montgomery March, the Lowndes County Interpretive Center in Hayneville is operated by the National Park Service; it opened its doors to the public in 2006. The Center features exhibits giving reverence to the men and women who participated in the March and recordings from participants and eye witnesses add to the experience. Displays also include the re-creation of “Tent City” — the temporary

village (located outside of Lowndesboro) that accommodated sharecroppers who were kicked off their land for their participation in the movement.

Hayneville is Lowndes County’s first and only county seat, established in 1830. It was named for South Carolina politician Robert Y. Hayne. The town is one of the stops on the Selma to Montgomery March National Historic Trail. The 1856 Greek Revival courthouse is a historic building and is one of only four antebellum courthouses that remain in use in Alabama. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on June 24, 1971.

Named for a fort constructed by federal troops during the Creek War of 1813-14, Fort Deposit was established to serve as a supply base. The facility has been described as a fortified camp that housed as many as 1,200 men. Some remains of the fort are visible in town, including wells and munitions bunkers.

In 1935, Priester’s Pecans was established in a gas station in Fort Deposit and is now a worldwide supplier of the southern delicacy and its headquarters is a popular destination for travelers along I-65.

Since 1972, the town has also held the Calico Fort Arts and Crafts Fair during the second week of April and is one of the oldest and largest fairs in the South. The outdoor festival includes children’s activities, various artists, jewelry exhibitors, crafts, soft sculpture, quilts, birdhouses and feeders and a lot more.

One of the most beautiful and well-preserved antebellum communities in the entire South can be found in Lowndesboro, located in northern Lowndes County. The town was also named in honor



Pony ride at the Calico
Fort Arts & Craft Fair

*Photo: Courtesy of
The Lowndes Signal*

of the South Carolina Congressman Lowndes. By the time of the Civil War, Lowndesboro had become a community with a variety of architectural styles representing the Greek Revival, New England, Raised Cottage and other well-known types of design.

The residents of the town are committed to preserving the town's impressive antebellum structures. Many have been restored and are showcased during the annual Lowndesboro Heritage Celebration held in the spring. The festival includes tours,



"President's Home" 1834 -
Federal style architecture

historical reenactments and a town fair.

Additionally in Lowndesboro is the McCurdy Plantation horse, a gaited breed of horse developed by the McCurdy family of Lowndes County in the late nineteenth century. Originally bred to serve as a working breed for plantation and ranch work, the McCurdy horse is now a popular pleasure and trail animal and has become known throughout the South. The family continues to raise these horses on its farm in Lowndesboro.

The Okra Festival started as a simple, fun, neighborhood party in 2000 but has grown to an annual community festival. Since okra was one crop that survived the sweltering hot summer 13 years ago, it became an obvious name for the social gathering. Held in August, the festivities take place in the small community of Burkville (outside of Lowndesboro), showcasing regional foods, live music, local vendors, arts and crafts, children's activities and a family-friendly ambiance. A series of posters for the Okra Festival made by Amos Paul Kennedy (who began making them in 2002) has become so famous there are a few now displayed in the

Smithsonian Museum in Europe and throughout the United States.

A commanding cliff overlooking the Alabama River near the small community of White Hall holds a noteworthy place in Alabama history and folklore. This was the site of Holy Ground, the town of a Creek Prophet and a base of operations for Red Stick during the Creek War of 1813-14. The site is now Holy Ground Battlefield Park and is maintained by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The facilities include a boat launch ramp, a swimming beach, a bird watching center and other outdoor accommodations. The park also contains an overlook along the Alabama River which is in the vicinity of the location where Red Eagle, of the Creek Indians, swam his horse across the river to escape during the Creek Wars.

Lowndes County has access to major highways such as I-65 and Highway 80, the Alabama River and two railroads. With long term plans for a brighter future for the county, the newly formed Lowndes County Economic Development Commission (LCEDC) is on a mission to bring economic prosperity to the county. The LCEDC plans to work with the Alabama Department of Commerce, the Economic Development Partnership of Alabama and other state and local agencies to market the county and is certain to attract future industry, recreational venues and new visitors to the area. ■



Co-founder of the Okra Festival
Barbara Evans with renowned
poster artist Amos Paul Kennedy

Photo: Courtesy of The
Lowndes Signal

Sources: *The Heritage of Lowndes County/Alabama*, *Encyclopedia of Alabama*, *The Lowndes Signal*, *Explore Southern History*

Holiday Electrical Safety for Children

The holidays are an exciting time of year for children and it's also a period when parents and caregivers often overlook the increased electrical dangers young children may face.

According to data from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), approximately 2,400 children 10 years old or younger suffer electrical injuries each year.

Here are some safety steps that parents and caregivers can take to prevent electrically-related tragedies before they happen.

- Don't use electric space heaters in rooms where children are unsupervised. Children may stick their fingers or other objects through the protective guards, causing burns or shock.
- To prevent both burns and electrical shocks, don't give any child under the age of 10 a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, buy toys that are battery-operated.
- When purchasing presents for children, make sure all electric toys bear a fire safety label from an independent testing laboratory to avoid those that could be highly flammable.
- Don't allow your children to use electrical toys near water and make sure they know that water and electricity don't mix.
- Look for potential danger spots near candles, the fireplace, trees and/or electrical connections.

- Don't hang or string holiday lights across a wall or window that may be low enough for a small child to grab.
- Keep liquids like drinks away from electronics, such as TVs, VCRs and computers as they could spill and cause dangerous shocks and fires.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights and a person touching a branch could be electrocuted.
- Replace worn or frayed electrical cords with appropriately insulated and protected cords, and keep young children away from cords altogether as they are also choking hazards.

Remember that the homes you visit may not be child-proofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots to make sure that there are no obvious electrical hazards to your child. Enjoy your holiday time with the little ones and keep safety first. ■





Recipe for *Efficiency* from CAEC

Insulating Foam Sealant

Air leakage through lots of small holes and cracks around the home is a major cause of heating and cooling loss. In fact, adding up all the holes in the average residence is similar to heating and cooling your house year-round with an open window. To reduce energy costs, air-seal

and eliminate drafts, start with an easy fix by applying insulating foam sealant throughout your home. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, using foam sealant to fill these gaps can typically save up to 20 percent annually on heating and cooling costs.

Utensils (tools):

Gloves (optional)
Eye Protection
Straight Edge or Butter Knife

Ingredients (supplies):

Insulating Foam Sealant

Directions: Insulating foam sealants come in different applications (i.e. windows and doors, gaps and cracks, firelock, aquascape and landscape). Be sure to apply the appropriate foam sealant and read all instructions thoroughly before applying. For this application, we will apply a gaps and cracks sealant.

1. Before you apply the foam, make sure the area is free of dust, dirt and oil.

2. Apply sealant foam on the outer part of the hole.



3. Only fill about a quarter of the hole to allow room for the foam to expand.



4. Use a flat edge tool or butter knife to scrape off excess foam.



Note: Read instructions to determine drying time of the foam; it may take several hours to dry completely.

The cost for a 12-ounce can should be less than \$5 at your local hardware or home improvement store.

Foam sealants expand to form an outer skin containing closed air cells that provide an effective barrier against energy loss. And when dry, most of these sealants can be painted to match trim. Use around windows and doors, plumbing fixtures, electrical outlets, baseboards, sill plates, exhaust vents, siding edges, sky lights, attic fans, garage ceilings, etc. This simple “recipe” can help you conserve energy and reduce heating and cooling bills.

What does \$1 mean in today's world?



A dollar means not having to choose between purchasing medication or having hot water.

A dollar means not having to choose between buying food or lighting your home.

For as little as \$1 a month CAEC members can support the Project SHARE program and help those in need from having to make these tough choices.

Help elderly and disabled Alabamians power their homes by saying yes to Project SHARE.

To participate in Project SHARE and become a part of the network of neighbors helping neighbors, you can contribute \$1, \$2, \$5 or any other whole-dollar amount you choose. The amount you select will be automatically added to your utility bill each month.

Call (800) 545-5735 for more information, fill out the Project SHARE information on your next bill or complete the form below and return it to CAEC.

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



Yes, I agree to help those in need through Project SHARE.

Name: _____ Phone #(s): _____

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

Account #: _____


Email: _____

Amount I wish to donate to Project SHARE each month: ____\$1 ____\$2 ____\$5 ____ Other (please specify)

Signature: _____



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