

Time to give thanks

As families across the country gather together to give thanks this holiday season, we at Pickwick Electric Cooperative are also counting our blessings. And we have much to give thanks for.

We all can be thankful for this beautiful corner of Tennessee we call home and for the friendly, caring neighbors who make up the membership of PEC.

Our cooperative is blessed to be served by well-trained and courteous employees who strive each day to deliver safe, reliable and

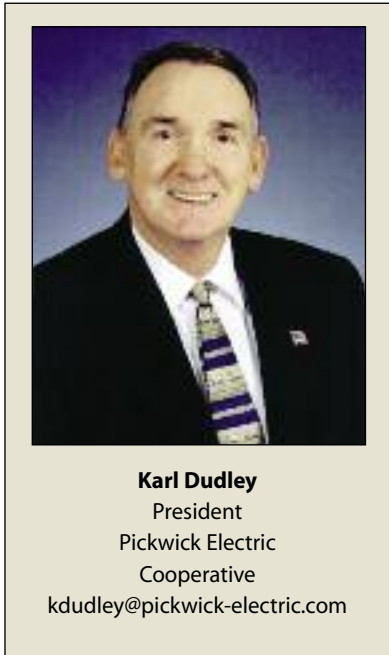
affordable electricity to more than 20,000 homes and businesses across our service area.

We are thankful that we live in a country blessed with the resources that make it possible to deliver electricity in this manner and for the technology that allows us to do our jobs more efficiently in providing better service to our members. Much of the world does not have this option.

On a personal note, as I look back at this past year, it was a pleasure for me to meet with the almost 700 people who attended our annual meeting marking the 75th anniversary of PEC. This was my 14th annual meeting as PEC

manager/president, and it has been a privilege for me to have worked for you for 40 years. The Lord willing, I look forward to continuing working for you.

We've had an interesting and



Karl Dudley
President
Pickwick Electric
Cooperative
kdudley@pickwick-electric.com

eventful year with an ice storm in January, a tornado in May and one of the hottest summers on record with the highest electric bills in PEC's history.

The power was out for approximately 75 hours during the ice storm and about 100 hours following the tornado. Although our crews did not receive much rest during this time, they managed

to get the power restored without any accidents.

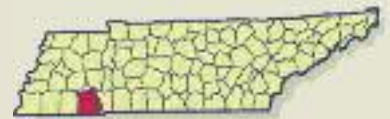
If you were impacted by the ice storm or tornado, I want to thank you for your patience as our crews, with help from our neighboring co-ops, worked around the clock to restore your power. Your notes, e-mails and phone calls expressing your gratitude were much appreciated. The help received from local farmers and contractors stepping up to assist us reminded me that the cooperative spirit is still alive and well in our communities.

Thank you for your continued support of PEC. May God richly bless you and your family this holiday season.



Pickwick Electric Cooperative

**Serving members in all of
McNairy County and
portions of Chester,
Hardeman and Hardin
counties in Tennessee and
Alcorn and Tishomingo
counties in Mississippi**



530 Mulberry Ave.

P.O. Box 49

Selmer, TN 38375

Phone Numbers:

731-645-3411

731-632-3333

1-800-372-8258

Website:

www.pickwickec.com

**These five pages contain
local news and information
for members of Pickwick
Electric Cooperative.**

PEC celebrates 75 years of service

Approximately 700 members and friends turned out for Pickwick Electric Cooperative's 75th anniversary celebration on Thursday, Sept. 9. The McNairy County High School Little Theater was filled to capacity as PEC members enjoyed the entertainment provided by the Southern Harmony Quartet. The crowd also enjoyed hot dogs, Moon Pies and RC Colas, along with some nice door prizes. Each registered member received a Lodge skillet bearing PEC's 75th anniversary logo.



Joining PEC President Karl Dudley, right, for the 75th anniversary celebration were Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association General Manager Tom Purkey and Laura Campbell, Tennessee Valley Authority general manager of customer service in West Tennessee.



PEC members admire the 75th anniversary quilt made by the Needles & Pins Quilting group of Bethel Springs.



Lilli Coats receives her Louie the Lightning Bug "tattoo" from Washington Youth Tour student Sarah Killingsworth.



From left, retired employees Linda Crotts, Glen Plunk and Jackie Inman enjoy the fellowship at the annual meeting.



A large crowd attended the 2010 annual meeting.

A chance to give back

By Jack Cheshier, JC's Children's Shopping Spree coordinator



County with a brighter Christmas. My dream was to allow more children to spend additional funds, but the reality was that several obstacles

Jack Cheshier, left, is JC's Children's Shopping Spree coordinator. Below, National Honor Society students eagerly await the arrival of the kids to begin the shopping spree.



As we approach the holiday season, we are reminded life is all about choices, giving and receiving. Several years ago, McNairy County native Jack Cheshier chose to make a difference in his community. This is his story.

McNairy County is a wonderful place to live and an ideal place to raise a family. One of the reasons I believe this to be so is because of the way its citizens reach out to those in need.

As a new member of the Selmer Jaycees, I was asked to accept chairman of a project called the Children's Shopping Spree. At that time, there was a budget of \$350, with approximately 50 children participating from Selmer Elementary School. This project involved soliciting donations for funding, coordinating the project with the McNairy County school system and determining a method for selecting our neediest children who would best be served by such an endeavor.

The problem, as I saw it, was to increase our funding so that the Jaycees could better provide underprivileged children in McNairy

stood in our way.

The first major challenge was where to get the funds to support such a large project. Our local Jaycee chapter operated on a limited budget, so I

began contacting various people in the business community for their input. I was given the name of a local businessman who was known for his generosity in the past. I met with and communicated to him what I felt was a major drawback to our current project in relation to our county's need. Fortunately he was in a financial position at the time to anonymously donate the funding necessary to spread our project county-wide.

In the next planning stage, the focus was on the selection of the participants. I met with several faculty members of the elementary school from which the Shopping Spree had originated to determine their criteria for including children in this project. It was agreed that students in grades K-4 would be our targets due to peer pressure and budget issues.

However, I soon learned that there were differing viewpoints as to how to select the most deserving children. Some teachers based a child's need on whether he or she was a recipient of the free lunch program. Others considered factors such as family size and socioeconomic status. Since our county had a high percentage of free lunch program recipients, it was decided that each teacher would use his or her best judgment and knowledge of the student's situation to determine a child's eligibility.

The final step was to see how much money we could raise to determine the amount to be allotted for each child and how to include all five McNairy County elementary schools in our project. A decision was reached by teachers, businessmen and Jaycees to allot each child \$20. This was in 1982, and we felt that amount was adequate for shoppers to purchase worthwhile items. And we would be able to include all the McNairy County elementary schools in our project.

I then contacted the superintendent of schools to discuss the project and confirm transportation arrangements. He readily agreed to the proposal and offered to provide buses and ask for volunteer drivers at no cost.

Once again, after coming up with a number of children to be included in this project, I met with my donor to explain the anticipated procedure and the amount of funds needed. He graciously accepted the task of funding the project in full. The only other item was to recruit enough volunteers to assist our shoppers in spending their \$20.

It was suggested that McNairy Central High School Honor Society's 25 members would be the perfect group to serve as volunteers. They gladly accepted the responsibility, a

date was set and the first county-wide Children's Shopping Spree was about to become a reality.

The Shopping Spree began with the first group of children arriving at Walmart at 8 a.m. These 50-70 children from each of our county schools were given ample time for browsing, trying clothes on or picking out special presents for themselves or family members. They also enjoyed the snacks provided by Walmart employees. By noon, the project was completed, and it was very difficult to decide who had reaped the greatest benefit — the children or the many volunteers who had seen the joy and excitement on the shoppers' faces.

Over the years, the Jaycees chose to discontinue this project. I decided to set up a 501(c)(3) to be called JC's Children's Shopping Spree, a not-for-profit organization that isn't associated with any other club or organization. The Shopping Spree has expanded to benefit more than 300 children every year, spending \$40-\$45 each. Apart from the obvious growth of the project to reach more children, I believe it has helped our

community become more aware of the need to encourage and support each other. Another significant result was the inspiration for other communities to implement similar ideas. It was my hope and prayer that other counties would see what McNairy County was doing for their needy children and become involved in helping their special children enjoy a brighter Christmas. I am grateful that over the last 25 years, I have seen this become a reality.

The funding necessary to finance this project has grown to approximately \$15,000 and includes many local business leaders, corporations, civic clubs, churches and great folks who walk up and put cash or checks in my hand and tell me it is for the children.

I've had the honor and privilege of overseeing the Children's Shopping Spree since the very first county-wide project. This will be my 28th year, and I have raised in excess of \$265,000 and helped approximately 8,000 children experience a brighter Christmas. Anyone who has belonged to a civic organization and chaired a project of any type knows

how much work is involved in raising funds and taking care of all the necessary arrangements for an undertaking of this magnitude. It is a very important part of my Christmas season. People of all ages from all over the county assist me because it's such a rewarding experience. The joy of spreading Christmas cheer to these special children is contagious and draws volunteers and donors to offer their time and money again and again.

God promises that if we will concentrate on blessing others, he'll take care of our needs. There's almost nothing that God won't do for the person who really wants to help other people. In fact, God guarantees this blessing. In Luke 18, Jesus says, "I guarantee this. Anyone who gives up anything for the kingdom of God will certainly receive many times more in this life and will receive eternal life in the next world to come."

If you have an interest in participating in this worthwhile project or you'd like more information, contact me at 731-645-4972, ext. 230, or jcheshier@spectrumcorporation.com.

Celebrate Veterans Day this year by remembering those who have served our country and those who are serving today.

Nov. 11 • Veterans Day

PEC would like to honor our veterans and all veterans who have served our country. Present and retired employees, directors and attorney who served in the armed forces are Terry Abernathy, Bobby Barnes, Jerry Burks, Jimmy Dickey, Larry Gage, Clyde Garrison, Harold Finley, Robert Goad, Joe Gortney, Leslie Gwin, Jamie McAfee, John Mitchell, Layne Moffett, Terry Pearson, Glen Plunk, Maynard Smith, Joe Thomas, Jackie Weaver, Bobby Whitley, Marvin Wilkes and Robert Williams.





Extension cord safety: Make smart connections

During the holiday season, families often string together extension cords without a second thought. Unfortunately, not all cords are created equal.

Just because an extension cord can reach an outlet across a room doesn't mean it's the right one for the task at hand. If a tool, appliance or holiday display draws more current than an extension cord can carry, it may cause the cord (and whatever is connected to it) to overheat and start a fire.

Cords come in many lengths and are marked with a size or gauge. The gauge is based on the American Wire Gauge (AWG) System in which the larger the wire, the smaller the AWG number.

For example, a 12-gauge wire would be larger and power larger-wattage appliances than a 14-gauge wire. A cord, based on its gauge, can power appliances of a certain wattage only at specific distances. As the cord gets longer, its current-carrying capacity drops.

Using the right cord for the job is only the first step in using extension cords safely. Follow these tips to ensure safe use and make smart connection decisions:

- Look for the Underwriters Laboratories (UL) symbol. The UL mark means that samples of the cord have been tested for safety hazards.
- Never use an indoor extension cord outdoors as it could result in electric shock or trigger a fire. Extension cords that can be used outdoors will be

clearly marked "Suitable for Use with Outdoor Appliances."

- Extension cords should not be placed underneath rugs or heavy furniture, tacked in place to a wall, taped down or used while coiled or bent. Match the length of the cord to your needs.
- Store all cords indoors when not in use. Outdoor conditions can deteriorate a cord over time.
- Unplug extension cords when not in use. The cord will continue conducting electricity until unplugged.
- On cords with more than one outlet, use the covers provided for unused openings. Children and pets face serious injury if they chew on unused outlets or stick sharp metal objects into the openings.
- Do not use extension cords that are cut or damaged. Touching even a single exposed strand of wire can result in an electric shock or burn.
- Never file or cut the plug blades or grounding pin of an extension cord or appliance to plug it into an old outlet.
- As a safety feature, extension cords and most appliances boast polarized plugs (one blade wider than the other). These special plugs are designed to prevent electric shock by properly aligning circuit conductors. If a plug does not fit, have a qualified electrician install a new outlet.

Source: Underwriters Laboratories Inc.



This Thanksgiving,

COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

The crops are harvested, and the land rests, gathering its strength for another season of plenty. At this time of year we pause from our work to say thanks for the beautiful blessings that have been bestowed on us. One of the special blessings for which we say thanks is our pleasant association with you. Your trust, confidence and friendship — both in a personal and business manner — mean so much to us. May the Thanksgiving season be a joyous one for you and your loved ones.

The PEC office will be closed Thursday, Nov. 25, and Friday, Nov. 26, in observance of Thanksgiving.