

# Electric rates move up

While the Tennessee Valley Authority's recent announcement of a proposed rate increase this fall of \$524 million isn't the kind of news consumers in the Tennessee Valley like to hear, it probably shouldn't be a surprise.

Spiraling costs of coal, natural gas and power purchased by TVA from the marketplace are the chief villains. With no apparent end in sight for the rising cost of these essential commodities, TVA is following a path very similar to that of

other regional utilities that have either implemented or proposed rate increases this year.

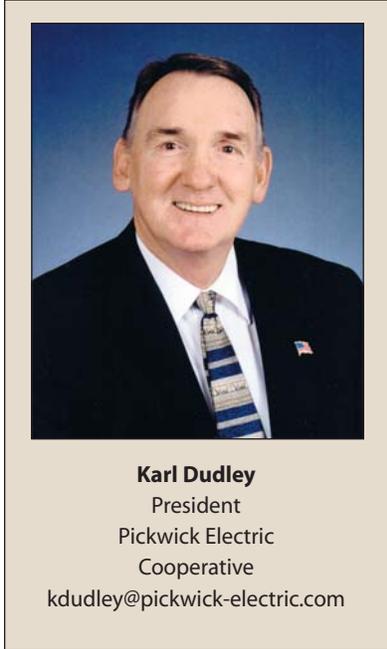
Obviously, knowing that others are also raising their rates provides little, if any, comfort for Tennessee Valley consumers. But it does effectively underscore the legitimacy of the cost pressures TVA is feeling for fuel and purchased power.

Our regional association, the Tennessee Valley Public Power Association, has met several times with TVA this year to review data supporting the case for the rate increase. Based on the data presented, we understand TVA's need to increase rates due primarily to its rising fuel and purchased power costs.

TVA has told its 157 power distributors that while these cost pressures have continued to grow, it has been actively working to contain costs and increase efficiency.

Among other things, TVA cites the following:

- While coal costs have increased by 25 percent in the past two years, the market price for a similar mix of coals has increased by more than 60 percent.
- Capital and operating and maintenance budgets for the 2004-2006 timeframe have been reduced by more than \$190 million.
- In 2004, fossil-fueled generation set an all-time record for summer reliability,



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saving TVA an estimated \$123 million.

- Also in 2004, TVA achieved its highest level of nuclear generation.

These cost-containment efforts and TVA's diverse generating resources have certainly helped keep the current rate increase from being even higher. But more needs to be done. Power distributors across the Tennessee Valley are united in their belief that TVA should continue to aggressively seek additional ways of cutting costs and have openly expressed this viewpoint.

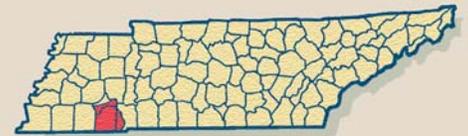
It's worth noting that the largest single expenditure we have at Pickwick Electric Cooperative is for electricity purchased from TVA for our residential, commercial and industrial customers. In fact, every month approximately 75 cents of every dollar we receive from our members goes to TVA to pay for wholesale power. That

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## 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



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These five pages contain local

news and information

for members of Pickwick

Electric Cooperative.



## Electric rates

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leaves a very small margin for us to use for operating and maintaining our distribution system and paying our other bills. And we are not immune to cost pressures similar to those affecting TVA. Our expenditures for goods and services essential to the delivery of electricity are also rising.

The idea of a rate increase — now or in the future — certainly isn't a pleasant thought for PEC or our customers. But as a trip to the gas pumps will attest, fuel costs are at near record levels, and, unfortunately, TVA and others are not immune to the effects these spiraling expenses are having on the cost of doing business.

Our pledge to you remains the same: We will continue to work hard to keep our rates as low as possible while also providing the best possible service for our customers.

# Your electric cooperative celebrates 70 years service

You are encouraged to become involved in your cooperative by attending the Pickwick Electric Cooperative annual meeting Thursday, Sept. 15, at McNairy Central High School. We invite all members to attend and help us celebrate 70 years of service to the community. The event will kick off at 4 p.m. with free hot dogs and Cokes for everyone, free bucket truck rides, displays and entertainment. The first 500 members to register will receive a stadium blanket.

The Step-N-Tyme Band will provide family entertainment starting at 5 pm. The band was started in 1999 when Randy and Gayle Cotner opened the Step-N-Tyme Family Dance in Savannah, Tenn., to provide a good, clean atmosphere for the entire family to enjoy. Even though a couple of the original band members have left and been replaced over the past five years, the heart of the talented group remains the same today. The band plays a wide variety of music to please the ears of all ages. This variety of music enables the group to perform



**The Step-N-Tyme Band will perform at this year's annual meeting. From left are Kenneth Sanders, bass guitar/singer; Billy Pickens, lead guitar/back up vocals; Joanie Pickens, singer/rhythm; Gayle Cotner, singer/sound; Randy Cotner, drummer; and Dennis Rose, singer/rhythm guitar.**

in many settings such as benefits, stage shows, family dances and concerts. Currently, Step-N-Tyme plays at the Reagan Civic Center in Reagan, Tenn., on Saturday nights.

In addition to the blankets, the fun and entertainment, a number of nice door prizes will be given away, including a TV, microwave oven, VCR, DVD player and others.

We invite you to come out and be a part of this historical 70th annual meeting.



**Party Jumpers will be provided for the the children, and those who would like can take a bucket truck ride.**

## Highlights

1. Free hot dogs and Cokes
2. Bucket truck rides
3. Free stadium blanket to first 500 to register
4. Party Jumper for the kids
5. Entertainment by Step-N-Tyme



## PEC writing contest winners tour Washington, D. C.

It's one of the best ways a high school senior-to-be can begin a summer vacation: by joining 1,400 students from across the nation for a fun-filled, event-filled and educational week in our nation's capital.

That's exactly how six students and one teacher from high schools within Pickwick Electric Cooperative's service area kicked off the season this year. They were winners of the annual Youth Tour to Washington D. C., sponsored by Pickwick Electric Cooperative and conducted by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, a service organization representing the state's 23 member-owned electric cooperatives. More than 300 students from the PEC service area participated in the competition, which invited high school juniors to write short stories on the theme, "Electric Cooperatives: Going Beyond the Wires."

Local writers making the trip from Adamsville High School were Megan Bridges and Cory Carter. Representing McNairy Central High School were Ben DiChiara, Fallon Cone, Jordan Gillentine, Dustin Gibbs and teacher Delise Teague. PEC representatives Bobby Barnes and Donny Gibbs participated as chaperones.

While touring the Washington, D. C., area, students and adult advisers visited a number of historical sites including



**While on their way to Washington, the PEC group toured Monticello. From left are Donny Gibbs, Bobby Barnes, Fallon Cone, Jordan Gillentine, Megan Bridges, Dustin Gibbs, Delise Teague, Ben DiChiara and Cory Carter.**

Mount Vernon, home of George Washington; Monticello, home of Thomas Jefferson; the Lincoln, Washington, Jefferson and Roosevelt memorials; Arlington National Cemetery; the Vietnam, World War II and Korean Veterans memorials; the Washington Cathedral; Library of Congress; Supreme Court building; and the Smithsonian Museums complex. They had lunch at the Hard Rock Cafe, visited the Holocaust Museum and saw a production of "Beauty and the Beast" at Toby's Dinner Theatre.

The group received a special welcome to the U.S. Capitol building by Sens. Bill Frist and Lamar Alexander. They also met with Rep. Martha Blackburn during a breakfast held at the Rayburn House Office Building located near the Capitol.

"We're proud to be involved in an activity that offers students throughout our service area the chance to take part in such a worthwhile educational process," says PEC President Karl Dudley. "As a member-owned cooperative, PEC is a full-service organization for our members and their families. We do more than just provide electricity. We try to create better standards of living for our members by improving local economies and by sponsoring educational programs for students and adults alike. The Washington Youth Tour Writing Contest helps our future members learn about our nation's government and our nation's cooperatives, and that makes it worthwhile."



**From left: Dustin Gibbs, Fallon Cone, Ben DiChiara, Delise Teague, Jordan Gillentine, Megan Bridges and Cory Carter visited the Washington National Cathedral.**

# PEC hosts Pick Tennessee Products Cooking School

On May 26, the Selmer Senior Citizens Center was the site of the Pick Tennessee Products Cooking School. Tammy Algood, spokesperson for the Tennessee Department of Agriculture's Pick Tennessee Products campaign and food marketing specialist with the University of Tennessee Extension, presented the seminar to a full house. The school was hosted by Pickwick Electric Cooperative and Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association.

Algood is well known throughout the state as she writes regular columns for *The Tennessean*, one of the state's most widely circulated newspapers, and *Waistlines*, a Nashville woman's publication. She has appeared on nationally broadcast television shows such as TNN and HGTV. You may have also seen her on public TV and on network broadcasts across the state.

Algood said of the cooking school, "The purpose of the school is to help consumers identify, choose and use Tennessee-farmed and processed foods. It also helps the Tennessee economy as it saves the consumer money because they are buying



**Tammy Algood, left, presented the Pick Tennessee Products Cooking School to approximately 50 people in Selmer. Algood prepared several different dishes for tasting during the school.**

products that are grown locally. Our goal is to promote products that are available locally and incorporate that with cooking techniques."

During the school, attendees got to sample some delicious dishes such as Lemon Tea Cake, Perfect Roasted Pork Loin, Rosemary Cream Biscuits, Country Herb Flatbread, Marinated Cheese and Stuffed Strawberries. In addition to the food demonstrations, attendees received instruction on kitchen basics and appliance use. For

example, they were told how to properly control the temperature of the oven, refrigerator and freezer. They also learned how to choose the proper knife for each kitchen job and benefits of purchasing the right cutting board.

Each participant was required to register prior to the class, which was limited to the first 50. The class, one of three held in West Tennessee, filled to capacity within a few days. It was free to the public, but each attendee was asked to bring a donation of \$10 worth of nonperishable food, which was given to the local food bank. More than 500 pounds of food was collected and taken to McNairy County Loaves and Fishes.

Not only did each participant go home with new cooking ideas, but they also received a goody bag that included the "Taste of Tennessee" cook book, measuring spoons, "The Pick Tennessee Products Almanac" and valuable coupons to purchase products from White Lily, one of the companies providing ingredients for the school.



**Glenda Barron, Stacy Foy, Rita Casey and Crystal Moore were among several volunteers who helped prepare the food and participated as servers.**



# Local students attend Electric Camp

## “4-H Electric Camp: Electricity in Motion”

Every summer 4-H’ers from across the state flock to the University of Tennessee campus in Knoxville to attend 4-H Electric Camp. Of the 432 students in attendance this year, five were from the Pickwick Electric Cooperative service area.

“4-H Electric Camp: Electricity in Motion” was the theme for this year’s event, sponsored by PEC, other power distributors, Tennessee Valley Authority and the University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service and Industries. The purpose of the camp is to give young people a better understanding of energy, electricity and basic science through fun, informative “hands-on” workshops. The camp helps 4-H members develop leadership abilities, build character and assume citizenship responsibilities.

During the 14th annual camp, 4-H members were involved in several fun learning experiences, including constructing an electric motor, a wind turbine generator and a continuity tester. They kept these items and took them home. They also learned about electric vehicles and got to drive an electric golf cart. Other activities involved robotics and the campers were briefed on safety practices to be observed around high-voltage power lines.

In addition, 4-H’ers watched the “Million-Volt” show presented by Robert Kramp and were treated to an afternoon at



**4-H Electric Camp participants from the PEC service area are, from left, instructor Larry Gage of PEC, Zack Brown, Jimmy Nicely, Heather Ferguson, Hanna Brown and Samantha Janovetz.**

Dollywood in Pigeon Forge. Other leisure activities included swimming and a pizza party.

“We at PEC want our young people to have a better understanding of what electricity does for them. Through sponsorship of the Electric Camp, we have the opportunity to educate today’s youth about the value of electricity and the vital role it plays in their lives, said PEC President Karl Dudley.

Applications to attend Electric Camp are made through county 4-H extension agents.



**Electric camp participants, above from left, Samantha Janovetz, Heather Ferguson and Hanna Brown; and at right Zack Brown and Jimmy Nicely participate in a hands-on learning center. The students, sponsored by PEC, built their own continuity testers.**

