

# “Our Energy, Our Future”

It seems like every time America discovers it has a crisis on its hands, our government wakes up and proposes a crash program to fix it. Henry Ford was one of the first to observe it and even coined a name for it: “the crisis-crash syndrome.”

Sometimes, a crisis pushes us to great heights — literally. In 1958, the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, the first orbiting satellite. A short time later, President John F. Kennedy responded by launching a “crash program” to commit all necessary U.S. talent and resources to putting an American on the moon by the end of the decade.

And, amazingly, we did it. Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon July 1969, well within Kennedy’s proposed timeline.

As policymakers in Washington begin the daunting task of trying to reduce the greenhouse gases responsible for climate change, it is instructive to look back at Kennedy’s example. The Apollo program harnessed the resources of government to make this stunning achievement possible.

But not every crisis leads to such an impressive result. Some of you are not old enough to remember the first Arab oil embargo of 1973 — 35 years ago — or the several more that followed over the years. Each time we were inconvenienced at the pump — often with no gas available at any price — we heard our leaders pledge to develop a national energy policy that would free us from the sword the foreign oil-producing nations held over us and our economy.

However, every attempt to formulate a serious national energy policy fizzled under the stress of competing special interests pulling policy makers in first one direction, then another.

And in fact, as Congress considers various approaches to dealing with climate change, lawmakers are already hearing from many of the same special interests.

The goal of addressing greenhouse gas emissions may pose a more difficult challenge than reaching the moon. True leadership on cli-

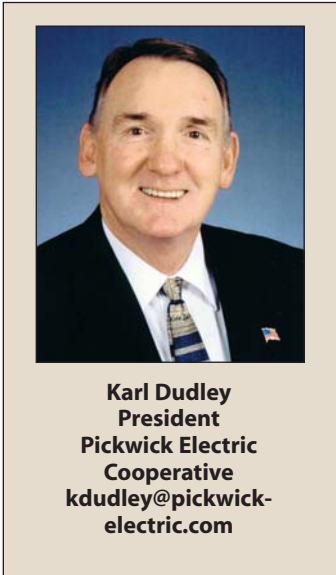
mate change will require balancing competing goals that all serve the public interest. Keeping electricity affordable and reliable is just as much in the public interest as mitigating climate change.

As we race to develop the technology to limit carbon dioxide, we must also ensure Americans have the energy they need not just in their homes but, also, to grow the economy.

Some of the legislative proposals under consideration, however, put at risk the current system that gives nearly every American access to dependable electricity. Congress needs to see the broader picture.

Responsible leadership on energy and climate change means first answering hard questions about the economic impact on all of us. Congress must not only examine all the consequences, lawmakers should engage in an honest conversation about those consequences with constituents before taking action.

What they should not do is put in place arbitrary, unrealistic emissions



## 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**

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**for members of Pickwick**

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targets set far in the future — when many of them will be retired from office.

Over the next 20 years, electric utilities must increase generating capacity by 30 percent just to keep up with the projected demand. The excess capacity we enjoyed for decades has been used up. At the same time that lawmakers address climate change, they need to address an impending electricity shortage, which in some parts of the country could be here as soon as 2011.

Some people say we can meet future demand through efficiency and renewable energy, and I am proud to say that electric co-ops have had great success in those areas. We are quickly integrating new renewable energy resources, deploying demand-side management tools, increasing system efficiency and promoting conservation and efficiency at the consumer level.

And while that is a good thing, it is only a drop in the bucket.

We need to remind Congress that energy efficiency alone will not solve the climate change challenge. Nor will renewable sources of energy suffice. Today, just more than 11 percent of co-op power comes from renewable sources. That percentage is growing daily, but renewables are a long way from becoming a major reliable source.

Simply put, significant reductions in carbon emissions over the long term will not happen without the same kind of massive and expensive investment in research and development that got Americans to the moon in 1969. Without leadership at the federal level, this investment will not be made.

A few groups have even proposed capping carbon emissions and letting the price of electricity rise. By letting the price rise, they argue, utilities could afford to pay for the new

technology they need to meet growing demand and capture carbon.

But this approach puts the burden for mitigating climate change on those least able to pay for it. Consumers, particularly those on fixed incomes, will not be able to afford electricity.

To be successful, the plan must be developed with the input of all parties, especially electric co-op member-consumers, and it must offer a balanced solution to climate change issues.

Anything less will be a betrayal of the trust our member-consumers have placed in their elected leaders. It would also be a radical departure from the goals established for cooperatives by Congress more than 70 years ago and supported by the actions of each succeeding Congress over the decades.

This is the message we will continue to push in Washington, where decisions can increase your electric bill more than any other factor.

## Dad's gone fishing

It's great to remember those childhood days when Dad would take me fishing. You see my dad was an avid fisherman, and he would go quite often. He could sit on the river bank all day, without ever getting a bite, enjoying every minute of it. I didn't have the patience he had, and after awhile I would become bored and end up in the water swimming.

There was never a doubt that my dad didn't love me, though at times he never told me. His actions and the little things he did for me were his way of saying I love you. I guess taking me fishing was one of those ways.

I will always remember my dad's warm smile as he sat in his favorite chair, an old green wooden rocker. It wasn't much of a chair but he sure enjoyed taking a nap in it.

Dad suffered a massive heart attack on a warm spring day. The memories of that day will forever linger in my mind. The striped bass were probably biting as I drove him to the hospital. As we passed his favorite fishing spot, I can still hear the words he said to me. "I sure don't feel like

fishing today." The next morning he died as I sat by his bedside.

Dad's death came as a shock to me, and for many years I longed for his companionship. I kept his rod and reel, and they still hang in my attic after 32 years. He was the last to use it. Every time I look at it I am reminded of the good times we had together.

If God allows fishing in heaven then Dad is sitting in a golden rocker on the banks of the River Jordan, dragging in a big catch with every cast. I can see that peaceful smile on his face as he drags another big one in. My heart tells me he's waiting for me so we can go fishing again.

You see, Dad hasn't really left; he's just gone fishing.

This Father's Day if your dad's still living, visit or give him a call. Do something with him he likes to do. Years from now you'll be glad you did.

Happy Father's Day to all our fathers.

*Written by Bobby Barnes*





# 'Electric Cooperatives: Energizing Our Communities'

By Logan Barnes, area winner of Pickwick Electric Cooperative

So, it's final, is it?" asked Paul Michaels, director of the cooperative's technological implementation group.

"Yes, sir," said the voice of Jerry McMurray, the coordinator of the cooperative's Green Power Switch project.

"That's good. We need those solar panels installed on those homes by the end of the evening," replied Mr. Michaels.

Jerry laughed with his reply: "Will do, boss. Just want to say thanks for approving this plan; it's going to save these folks a whole lot of money on their electric bills and help improve the quality of the environment."

"Don't thank me. It was the members' decision. Being a part of this cooperative means more than them just paying for electricity. It's their decisions that bring these new technologies into action," said Mr. Michaels, who happened to be in an extremely cheery mood.

"Well, I'll be sure to thank them! I'll give you a ring when the work is finished, boss," said Jerry before hanging up.

Mr. Michaels leaned back in his chair, the leather making a soft squeak as he did so. Thoughts leaked from his mind as the stress of the day faded away. The plan that was so urgently being completed was just a single part of this cooperative's shift to greener sources of energy, and it appeared to be going well. Ever since the members passed the movement to "go green" nearly a month ago, the technology offices had been abuzz with cost reports and action plans, and they all seemed to land on his desk at one time. But now, after all the trouble and toil and mathematical figuring, only one form was left upon his desk: registry of completion.

But that's the way it had been for Paul since joining the cooperative's workforce. New technological advances were breaking through all the time, and Paul had to handle nearly all of them. Why, only last year he had to deal with a plan involving the implementation of a nuclear power plant in a nearby city. That too, though, was decided upon

by members of the cooperative and not just the board of directors, and it turned out to be an excellent decision. It brought over 500 jobs to the area, not including the construction work that was needed.

So, that's what Paul's job was, providing a safer environment and more efficient technology for the people. It wasn't about big business or money to him or anyone else in the cooperative; it was about customer satisfaction and doing the best job that anyone could do to help the people of this town and the surrounding areas. The peace of mind alone that these technologies provided was enough to please Paul and make the intrinsic reward 20 times better than any money could give.

Paul was snapped from his daze as his telephone rang again. He quickly grabbed the receiver and answered, "Paul Michaels, Electric Cooperative, how may I help you?"

"Mr. Michaels, this is Roger Morris from the Cullman coal-firing plant," replied the voice of a man.

"Ah, Mr. Morris, how are you today?" replied Paul with the formalities.

"I just wanted to ask about this 'Solar Plan' your office was finishing today," replied Mr. Morris.

Paul felt as if he knew what was coming, "And?"

"I just wanted to say thanks, because my home is in the area that's getting those panels. I know it's going to help us clean up the environment and reduce emissions, but what about the jobs at the coal-firing plant?" said Mr. Morris nervously.

"Oh! I'm sorry Mr. Morris; I forgot to tell you during the start of this plan! The coal-firing plant will still be active and all your men will have their jobs," said Paul, completely surprised by Roger's happiness with the plan ... because the electric routing systems will be needed for the movement of this power to other areas! So, all jobs there are safe!

"Whew! Well, that relieves some of the pressure. I'm glad that the cooperative decided to reuse some of the



**Logan Barnes is the son of Pamela Yarbrough of Counce, Tn. He will be a senior at Adamsville High School next year.**





older facilities instead of just trashing them. It helps keep jobs in the system and prevents the pollutants in a place like this from getting out of hand," said Mr. Morris in a delighted tone.

Paul smiled; this was what he worked here for. "I can assure you, Mr. Morris, that the cooperative looks only at how the plans will help the people with efficiency, economical interest and reliability," said Paul with more than a hint of reassurance.

Mr. Morris finished with a "thanks" and hung up the phone. Paul turned his seat to face the large window of his office. Outside, he saw the sun starting its down-

ward movement to set and kids playing on the sidewalks of the city. The streetlamps, powered by the cooperative, of course, were just beginning to turn on. That's the way Paul felt on the inside, or at least that's what he told himself. He felt as if those streetlamps summed up the entire meaning of the cooperative. They sit there for years giving light to a city, powered by different means but still providing the same great light and service. Paul grinned widely for what seemed to be the thousandth time that day and stood, ready to go home to his own cheap, efficient cooperative power.

## Energy-efficient landscaping

Solar heat absorbed through windows and roofs makes your air conditioner work harder and gobble up more electricity. But incorporating shading concepts into your landscape design can help reduce this solar heat gain — and your cooling costs.

Shading from trees can reduce surrounding air temperatures as much as 9 degrees Fahrenheit. Because cool air settles near the ground, air temperatures directly under trees can be as much as 25 degrees cooler than air temperatures above nearby blacktop.

Trees can be selected with appropriate sizes, densities and shapes for almost any shading application. To block solar heat in the summer but allow much of it in during winter, plant deciduous trees. To provide continuous shade or block heavy winds, use dense evergreen trees or shrubs.

Deciduous trees with high, spreading crowns (leaves and branches) should be planted on the south side of your home to provide maximum summertime roof shading. Trees with crowns lower to the ground are more appropriate to the west, where shade is needed from lower afternoon sun angles. Trees should not be planted on the southern sides of solar-heated homes in cold climates because branches will block some winter sun.

Although a slow-growing tree may take many years before it shades your roof, it will generally live longer than a fast-growing tree. Also, because slow-growing trees often have deeper roots and stronger branches, they are less prone to breakage by

windstorms or heavy snow loads. Slow-growing trees can also be more drought resistant than fast-growing trees.

A 6-foot to 8-foot deciduous tree planted near your home will begin shading windows the first year. Depending on the species, the tree will shade the roof in five to 10 years. If you have an air conditioner, shading the unit can increase its efficiency by as much as 10 percent.

Trees, shrubs and ground cover plants can also shade the ground and pavement around the home. This reduces heat radiation and cools the air before it reaches your home's walls and windows. Use a large bush or row of shrubs to shade a patio or driveway. Plant a hedge to shade a sidewalk. Build a trellis for climbing vines to shade a patio area.

Vines can also shade walls during their first growing season. A lattice or trellis with climbing vines or a planter box with trailing vines shades a home's perimeter while admitting cooling

breezes to the shaded area.

Shrubs planted close to the house will fill in rapidly and begin shading walls and windows within a few years. However, avoid allowing dense foliage to grow immediately next to a home since the resulting humidity will create maintenance-related problems. Well-landscaped homes in wet areas allow winds to flow around the home, keeping surrounding soil reasonably dry.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy



*Photos courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service*





*Buying*  
**TWO BLOCKS**  
*of* **GREEN POWER**  
*for a year*  
*is the*  
**ENVIRONMENTAL**  
*Equivalent of*  
**RECYCLING**  
**15,322**  
**aluminum cans**

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A handful of quarters could help change the world. Join the Tennessee Valley Authority and Pickwick Electric Cooperative as they work to create clean, green sources of renewable energy by harnessing the power of the earth, sun and wind. To learn how you can sign up for the Green Power Switch program, call Pickwick Electric Cooperative at 731-645-3411 or visit [www.greenpowerswitch.com](http://www.greenpowerswitch.com).

Environmental equivalency is based on purchase of two blocks of green power per month for a year.