

Thanks to you, our members

November is the month set aside to celebrate Thanksgiving. For the youngsters in school, it's a month to study the Pilgrims and their feast of Thanksgiving in this new country. America has been blessed by many pilgrims throughout its colorful history. These pioneers made long, arduous journeys to improve the lives of others — journeys not just in miles, but journeys that overcame great obstacles to obtain a goal.

At Pickwick Electric Cooperative, one of the things we give thanks for this year is the 73rd anniversary of service to you, our members. Thanks goes to those leaders during the hard times of the 1930s who chose to make the tough decision on their journey to bring electricity to rural West Tennessee.

What started as a small group of folks with a common interest of making affordable electricity available to all has grown to an electric cooperative membership of more than 20,000. Our goal has not changed and never will. It is a simple goal — reliable, affordable electricity to all our members.

In September, we held our annual meeting to celebrate seven decades of service to this area. We were extremely pleased and thankful for everyone who came. We estimated the crowd at about 700 people.

We appreciate your support of your electric cooperative. This year, PEC began another journey. It will be long and difficult, too, but we will complete it. This journey will take us to energy conservation and increased efficiency in the electric industry. Along the path, we will have to adapt to survive. We are reviewing all aspects of our business to prepare for this new world.

This year, for the first time in our history, we will partner with the Tennessee Valley Authority and other utilities as owners of genera-

tion facilities to obtain lower-priced electricity. We are looking at new technology that will strengthen our power system.

One stop along the way to which we will return often is Washington, D.C., where legislators will write the rules for environmental standards. We will stay involved to protect your interests in this very important subject. Like the early pilgrims, this is a new road for us, but at the end of the journey, we will be here for you.

On behalf of all the dedicated employees of PEC, we are thankful for your continued support. We are thankful for the privilege of living in a great nation that God has blessed. May this Thanksgiving season bring health and happiness to you and your family.



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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.**

Scenes from PEC's 73rd Annual Meeting

On Tuesday, Sept. 16, approximately 700 members and friends celebrated Pickwick Electric Cooperative's 73rd annual meeting. Entertainment was provided by the Renewed Gospel Ministries

Quartet. The crowd was also treated to hot dogs and soft drinks along with some nice door prizes while our youngest members enjoyed the fun outside in the party jumpers.





Above are Charlie and Elizabeth Duncan, owners of Duncan Christmas Tree Farm and Gifts.

At left is a field of snow-covered Leyland cypress trees.

Choose and cut your next Christmas tree

For many it's a family tradition

Duncan Christmas Tree Farm and Gifts proudly celebrates its 10th anniversary this month. Owners Charlie and Elizabeth Duncan of Selmer started this business quite by accident when a fellow member of their church gave them a bundle of white pines he found on the side of the road. The Duncans planted the trees, thinking it would be easy to provide friends and family with live Christmas trees once the trees reached their average height.

After the first year, they realized that, like any other plants, the trees required some care: They had to be sprayed for insects and trimmed to shape. Also, the grass between the rows had to be mowed. Although the process was more labor-intensive than they thought, the Duncans chose to pursue a new career — raising Christmas trees — after retirement. After contacting the Tennessee Division of Forestry for assistance with their new-found business, they soon had acres of trees planted and were well on their way to fulfilling their dream.

The most common trees you will find at the Duncan Christmas Tree Farm are Virginia pines and Leyland cypress. The Virginia pine is short-needled with a pleasant pine fragrance, dense foliage and good growth rates. It has been by far the most widely planted Southern Christmas tree over the past three decades and still is the most common species at most farms in the deep South, according to the Tennessee Christmas Tree Growers Association.

Unlike the Virginia pine, the Leyland cypress has little aroma. It is not only a very beautiful Christmas tree, but if kept in water, it will outlast any other tree without leaving needles in the carpet.

“It takes approximately seven to eight years for the pines to mature to a height of six to 10 feet,” says Mr. Duncan. “Each year we rotate fields and plant about one and a half times more than we cut to anticipate some losses. We also plant in pots for those who want to improve the environment by replanting their Christmas trees.”

The Duncans average selling about 400 of the choose-and-cut trees per year. They also purchase and sell Fraser firs that are shipped from near Johnson City in East Tennessee. Average prices of the trees are from \$45 to \$100 with the pines being the least expensive.

“This year we will offer flocked trees, wreaths and garland,” Mrs. Duncan says. In flocking, a spray is applied from the sides to the entire tree, making the branches appear to be snow-filled.

In addition to the Christmas trees, the Duncans have a pumpkin patch and a corn maze during the fall season. They offer guided tours with a variety of activities and educational information about tree life, followed by refreshments.

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As the Duncans celebrate their 10th year in business, they will provide a few additional items during this Christmas season. The gift shop will be filled with unique gifts and decorating ideas, and they will offer a small concessions area serving popcorn, hot cocoa, cider and coffee. Visitors who don't need warming may choose a snow cone. A \$300 cash prize will be given away the week before Christmas, and everyone who buys a tree will be eligible for the drawing.

So bring your family and share in the Christmas celebration offered by Charlie and Elizabeth Duncan at Duncan Christmas Tree Farm and Gifts, located at 186 Hester Road in Selmer.

For more information, call the Duncans at 731-645-5769, e-mail duncantreefarm@centurytel.net. or visit their Web site, duncanchristmas-treefarm.com.



At left, the Duncan Christmas Tree Farm Gift Shop is decorated for fall, but in mid-November it will turn into a Christmas wonderland, above, filled with a variety of Christmas treasures.

A Salute to PEC veterans

Veterans Day is a day set aside to honor members of all branches of the United States armed forces for sacrifices made during times of war and peace.

November 11 was first proclaimed a holiday in 1919 as Armistice Day, so named for the signing of the armistice that brought an end to World War I.

In 1954, the name was changed from Armistice Day to Veterans Day in memory of those who took part in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and wars and conflicts that might follow.

Prior to the 2001 terrorist attacks in New York and on the Pentagon in Arlington, Va., many Americans took their freedom for granted. Most of us had forgotten about the many lives that were given throughout history to guarantee us this freedom.

Today, more than ever, we need to remember those who have made sacrifices in the past, but as we do so, let us not forget those who are serving today.

PEC present and retired employees, directors and attorney who served in the armed forces are Terry Abernathy, Bobby Barnes, Jerry Burks, director Jimmy Dickey, employee Jimmy Dickey, Larry Gage, Clyde Garrison, Harold Finley, Robert Goad, Joe Gortney, Leslie Gwin, Jamie McAfee, John Mitchell, Layne Moffett, Terry Pearson, Glen Plunk, Douglas Raines, Edward Shelby, Maynard Smith, Joe Thomas, Jackie Weaver, Bobby Whitley, Marvin Wilkes and Robert Williams.

We at PEC honor our veterans and all veterans who have served our country. It's men and women such as these who have kept our great nation strong and free.



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

Tuesday, Nov. 11 • Veterans Day



Saving energy dollars in church

Since most houses of worship rely on small or non-existent budgets for capital projects, low- or no-cost measures that reduce energy consumption generally produce the best results. Some simple steps involve changing the way congregants and staff use the building. Big-ticket fixes such as replacing heating and cooling systems with more energy-efficient units may not be practical until existing equipment reaches the end of its useful life.

A comprehensive energy audit remains the best way to identify cost-effective efficiency improvements in a church. Here are some suggestions for reducing energy consumption:

- Turn off the lights when not in use. While occupancy sensors can be cost-effective, posting reminders to ensure that the lights are turned off often does the trick. Timers are useful in lobbies, entries and vestibules to ensure that lights stay off during daylight hours.
- Replace incandescent lightbulbs with compact fluorescent lightbulbs.
- Control “plug loads” such as microwaves, computers and televisions that continue to draw power even when turned off. Unplug these appliances when finished using or before leaving the building.
- Heat and cool during occupied hours only. Make sure that heating and cooling controls are set at minimum levels or are switched off during periods of no use.
- Turn down water heater thermostats. Bathrooms and



kitchens used primarily during worship services are good targets for lowering water temperatures.

- Change filters. Filters should be changed on a monthly basis — more often if the congregation is located next to a highway or construction site.
- Clean condenser coils. Condenser coils should be washed thoroughly at the beginning and end of the cooling season.
- Check cabinet panels. Ensure that panels to rooftop air-conditioning units are attached with all screws in place, and make sure gaskets are intact to prevent air leaks. This check should be performed on a quarterly basis.
- Direct airflow. Close registers in any unused rooms to direct air where it is needed. If some rooms overheat while others are too cool, call a qualified heating and cooling contractor.
- Close vents. In place of air conditioning, many older buildings have natural ventilation systems to remove hot air in the summer. Be sure to close these vents in the winter.
- Seal gaps. Use caulk and weatherstripping to seal gaps around windows, doors, chimneys and other structural elements, including the foundation.
- Insulate hot water pipes with pipe insulation. Fix leaky faucets, showerheads, pipes and toilets.

Sources: *E Source*, *Energy Star*, *U.S. Department of Energy*

Happy Thanksgiving

The PEC office will be closed on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 27 and 28, for the Thanksgiving holiday. Should you have an emergency, we will have standby crews available.

