

## OFFICE LOCATIONS

### Jackson Office

1307 College Avenue  
P.O. Box 398  
Jackson, AL 36545  
251-246-9081

### Chatom Office

P.O. Box 453  
Chatom, AL 36518  
251-847-2302

### Toll Free Number

**1-800-323-9081**

### Office Hours

7 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Monday-Friday  
(Drive-thru Hours)

Pay your bill online at

**www.cwemc.com**

### Payment Methods

Payments can be made at our Chatom and Jackson offices with cash, checks, debit or credit cards

Our Customer Service Representatives can accept payments over the phone using a credit card or debit card

### Local Pages Editor

Anna Wright



# Thanksgiving is a verb

**I**t is hard to believe that the holiday season is here again. Many of you are already making plans to travel and visit with family and friends during the next two months. Others are waiting for their families to fill their homes again, as they travel in from out of town for the holiday season.

Often times we get caught up in the coming and going and forget that Thanksgiving is a verb as well as a national holiday. Thanksgiving is an action and an attitude we should strive to do once a day, rather than once a year.

I am thankful to be working for a member-owned rural electric cooperative. We have a staff of employees doing day-to-day jobs that continue our tradition of superior customer service to provide you, our members, with reliable electricity at a good value.

This year our employees have made many notary accomplishments. One we are particularly proud of is scoring a 94 on the NRECA safety accreditation that our statewide office, AREA, conducted of our facilities in April.

Safety is a term I mention almost every month, because of its importance in all aspects of this cooperative. Our linemen are always being refreshed on safety methods to practice as they are completing work orders each day. Practice makes perfect when it comes to safety.

Also, our customer service representatives continue to strive in offering quick and informative assistance to help with a variety of matters from our members. And we appreciate their level of professionalism that continues to hold our reputation in high regard among our members and their communities.

Many of our employees take

their hard working ethics outside of the office as they are involved in a number of community activities around our service area: From volunteer fire fighters, Little League coaches, dance teachers, cheerleader moms, helping with school fundraisers, on the sidelines at high school football games, being dedicated parents and serving in their church.

As a whole, Clarke-Washington EMC's employees work diligently each year to raise funds for our local Relay for Life and assist in the United Way of Southwest Alabama's annual campaign. We are proud to have been involved with these two organizations, and many more around the area, for many, many years.

In a nutshell, I am proud of the individuals who keep CWEMC running so efficiently. We work to maintain the type of electric utility where you can put your trust. Even though the trend is to go corporate, we are still your local, neighborhood electric cooperative.

Thank you!



**Stan Wilson**

CEO/Manager of  
Clarke-Washington Electric  
Membership  
Corporation

# Rain doesn't dampen success of Annual Meeting

Late summer thunderstorms couldn't keep the crowds away for Clarke-Washington EMC's Annual Meeting Tuesday, Sept. 9 at the Jackson Fairgrounds.

More than 750 registered members and their friends and family attended the meeting. Gates opened at 5 p.m. as the crowd began to enjoy the free hot dogs and Southern Gospel entertainment by the Roberts Family of Hobson.

Kaitlan Ramsey of Thomasville High School and Luke Wheeler of Millry High School voiced their appreciation to the cooperative for being able to attend the Youth Tour trip to Washington D.C. during the summer.

The crowd began to seek shelter from the rain under the white tent as Clarke-Washington EMC Board of Trustee President, Jack Bailey of Wagarville called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. He welcomed and thanked the crowd for their attendance despite the thunderstorms.

Ray Turner, secretary/treasurer for the board, spoke to the members on the positive growth Clarke-Washington EMC has seen in 2008.

Stan Wilson, manager and CEO of Clarke-Washington EMC thanked the board and employees for all their hard work year after year. He stressed the importance we place on the safety of our employees, maintaining our power lines and right-of-ways, and the commitment to provide electricity as a good value to our customers. As the rain continued to pour, Wilson told the members how much he appreciated their support of our co-op and for attending the meeting.

Five Clarke-Washington EMC linemen were absent from the meeting because they were helping another electric co-op in Houma, La. restore power after Hurricane Gustav hit that area on Labor Day: David Bryant, Kenny Harrell, Harold Hoven, Jason Pipken and Bobby Pritchard.

The meeting came to a close as many door prizes were drawn and the final giveaway, a 2002 Dodge Truck, was won by Kathryn Lee of Grove Hill.



Christy Clarke of CWEMC registers a member at the Annual Meeting



It was a good time for all at the Annual Meeting



Youth Tour Winners Luke Wheeler and Kaitlan Ramsey thank the members



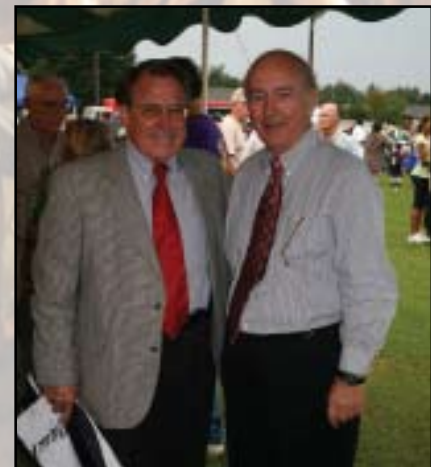
Families enjoyed the entertainment at the Annual Meeting



Rain couldn't keep the crowd away



Kathryn Lee of Grove Hill was the winner of the Truck



Jackson Mayor Richard Long and CWEMC Manager Stan Wilson

# Region's Rich on Display

*In a renovated bank in historic downtown  
works to better the communities*

*By Anna Wright*

The Old Bank Gallery in Thomasville displays some of Southwest Alabama's riches – the arts and crafts of its highly skilled citizens. Many talented individuals live, work and create throughout the woods and rolling river territory, inspired by the natural beauty, historical heritage and people around them.

The Old Bank Gallery is located in the front of the Ala-Tom Resource, Conservation and Development Council's office which is in the recently restored 1901 Bank Building in the historic section of downtown Thomasville.

Showcased in the Gallery are many colorful stained glass pieces that hang in the huge, front windows of the building as well as the woodworking pieces from a master craftsman who relocated in this area after Hurricane Katrina. Artistic photography, oil and water color paintings are framed and hanging along the high walls of the building offering just enough room to thoroughly see each piece of work. Other items include handmade jewelry, rolling pins and an assortment of collectibles.

Southwest Alabama also boasts of the settings for many award winning literary pieces: "Hell at the Breech," by Tom Franklin, and "A Yellow Watermelon," by Ted Dunagan are two local favorites available in the Gallery.

One local author in particular has close ties with the building. Alabama's story teller Kathryn Tucker Windham grew up in Thomasville and often visited her father, James Wilson Tucker, who served as the bank president for many years during the prime of the banking business. Several of her books, probably with some stories of her trips to the bank, now grace the gallery for people to enjoy.

In 2001 Ala-Tom RC&D had outgrown their current office in Thomasville and coordinator, Norman L. Burton was searching for a new place to relocate. He came across the old bank building and saw potential. Restoring an old building seemed to correlate with their mission of improving and enhancing the economic atmosphere of one of the many areas that they serve. Burton began to write grants and seek financial support to get the restoration of the building started.

The City of Thomasville helped with the purchase of the building for \$10,000 as Mayor Sheldon Day had just begun his campaign to restore the down town area, and the USDA



Stained glass and woodwork make for a beautiful piece



Oil paintings by local artist are on display



Inside the Ala-Tom RC&D Building

# Art Culture in Gallery

*Thomasville the Ala-Tom RC&D Council  
of Southwest Alabama*

added another \$50,000 to get the project off the ground.

Five years later the project was complete and Ala-Tom RC&D were able to move into the inspiring new and old building. The Clarke County Development Foundation, Regional Tourism Office and the Urban Forestry Program are also located in this building,

Since 1981 the Ala-Tom RC&D has been serving the nine counties of Southwest Alabama to promote the rural development of the area.

“Ala-Tom RC&D is a rural development organization that is funded by USDA to improve the quality of life and address problems on a regional basis instead of a city or town basis,” Burton said. “We work with a variety of projects and there are a lot of needs in this area so we get a lot of requests.”

They work with groups, schools, organizations and individuals in Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo, Monroe, Perry, Washington and Wilcox counties.

In 2008 Ala-Tom RC&D completed 28 projects for different communities in the 9-county service area totaling about \$1 million. Some of those projects include assistance with the Clarke County HIPPIY program, a walking trail in Fulton, a park in West Wilcox County, Dual Enrollment program for Thomasville High School, repair and re-start of the environmental education program at Gilmore Elementary School, and a Beautification Project for Jackson High School.

Future and ongoing projects consist of a computer class at the Washington County Library, a Farmers Market in Washington County, a park and walking trail in Millry and assistance with the State Forestry Museum in Grove Hill.

There are many stories to be told on a visit to the Old Bank Building – stories of the artists’ work in the Gallery, stories in the books of local authors, stories of people whose families did their banking business there a generation ago and stories yet to be told of those who are benefiting from the grants of Ala-Tom RC&D and the effortless leaders who want to improve their communities for the generations to come.

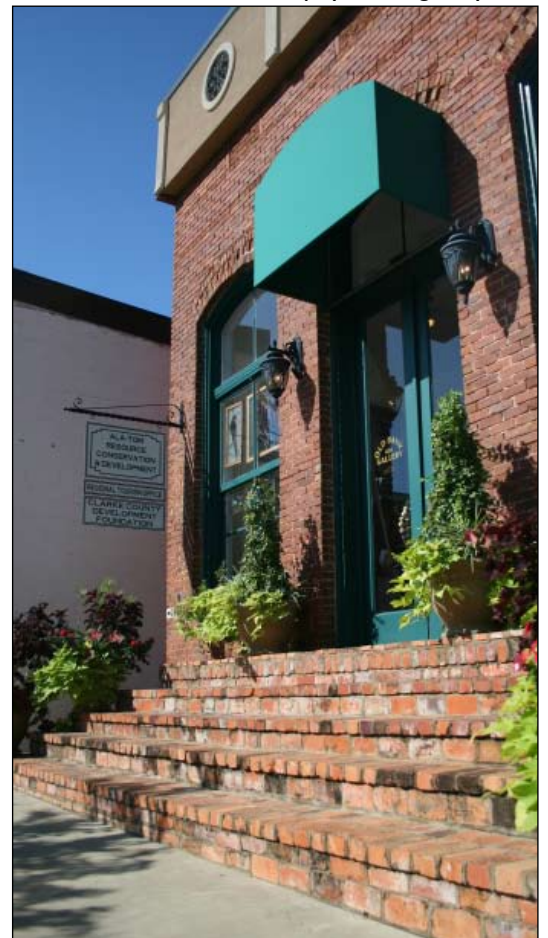
Ala-Tom RC&D and its volunteers are visionary individuals who, when the trend is corporate, remain true to the grass roots of a society that maintains and preserves this somewhat untouched area of Alabama. They are working to enhance the treasures of the area and develop Southwest Alabama enveloped in its natural resources.



Handcrafted jewelry by local artists



Oil paintings, photography, stained glass and other collectibles on display at the gallery



Outside the Old Bank Building

# 10 Efficient Tips

Here are 10 ways to shave your energy use this winter:

1. Turn on your ceiling fan—yes, in the winter. Switch the direction of the fan blades (just flip the switch on the fan's base into the "winter" position), and run the unit slowly. It will circulate the warm air that rises to your ceiling and make you feel warmer while you're in the room.
2. Add weather stripping or caulk around windows and doors to keep warm air from leaking out and cold air from sneaking in.
3. Rearrange your furniture. Move it away from heating vents. Push your most frequently used furniture away from exterior walls, which can feel colder than interior walls.
4. Install a programmable thermostat. Turning back your thermostat by 10 to 15 degrees for eight hours a day can save you up to 15 percent on heat.
5. Open drapes and blinds every day to let the warm sun in. Close them when it gets dark.
6. Repair leaks in your ductwork's seams and joints with a duct-sealing compound.
7. Wear a sweater so you can lower the thermostat a few degrees. You can save 1 percent on your heating bill for every degree you drop the heat.
8. Close the vents and doors in unused rooms.
9. Replace burned-out light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights. CFLs use 75 percent less energy than incandescent bulbs.
10. Switch to cold water for washing clothes and dishes.

## *Reduce heat loss with energy-efficient damper*

Wood-burning fireplaces can make you feel warm and toasty while the fire is lit, but they suck the heat right out of your room.

If you're not ready to trade your inefficient wood-burning fireplace with a decorative electric model, at least replace the damper.

Traditional "throat" dampers, made of cast iron and located where the flue meets the fireplace, can degrade over time. Even brand-new ones let some air leak out because of their metal-to-metal seals.

New damper designs are more energy efficient. These dampers are located on top of the chimney and create a tighter seal with a rubber gasket. Many are made out of materials that resist the rusting and warping of traditional dampers.

They operate with a handle connected to a chain that runs the length of the chimney. Because they are located on the top of the chimney, they eliminate the need for an additional chimney cap.

No matter what kind of damper your fireplace has, seal it off if you don't use it anymore. Spread caulk and insert a rigid piece of insulation into the chimney to block all heat loss.

# Can your fridge handle Thanksgiving?

Your turkey—and your family—won't be the only ones who get stuffed this Thanksgiving. Your refrigerator and freezer will be stuffed before and after the big meal.

With all that extra use, it pays to make sure your cold appliances are up to snuff before cooking time rolls around.

If you're one of the many homeowners whose refrigerators are more than 10 years old, you're paying more than you have to for electricity.

That aging appliance may still keep food cold, but it's doing so at a cost. New Energy Star refrigerators gobble at least 15 percent

less energy than federal standards require, and 40 percent less than models sold just seven years ago, according to the Department of Energy.

When you shop for a refrigerator or freezer, read the EnergyGuide label that you'll see in the store. It tells you how many kilowatt-hours of electricity the unit will consume in a year. The smaller the number, the better.

And opt for a refrigerator with a freezer on the bottom or the top; side-by-side designs burn more energy. Also, stand-alone, chest-style freezers are usually better insulated than upright models.



# CWEMC Rights-of-way sprayed over the summer months

Clarke-Washington EMC sprayed about 900 miles of rights-of-way (areas underneath power lines) this summer. Crews worked by spraying herbicide on vegetative growth and brush, and many dead trees were cut down that could cause potential outages.

Right-of-way spraying is an important part of CWEMC's maintenance plan. Keeping these areas clear reduces the amount of outages and makes it easier for bucket trucks to get close to the power lines and do their jobs more quickly and safely.



Crews sprayed about 900 miles of rights-of-way this summer. Here vegetation is being sprayed with herbicide to keep these areas clear of brush.







