

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

MAY 2007

May has arrived and the weather invites us to get out in our yards, visit with our neighbors and take a deep breath to soak in the season.

The signs of spring are clear: School children are antsy for the end of the year, baseball and softball season are in full swing, and many of you are sneaking off to the coast.

May is National Electric Safety Month. Providing you with reliable electricity is our main goal here at Clarke-Washington EMC, but we also want to warn you of its danger if it is not respected.

Here are some tips to help you stay safe during these warmer months:

- Never climb a tree if there is a power line near by. If the wind blows the wire against a branch, the electricity could travel through the tree and into you.

- Don't fly a kite near power lines. If your kite snags on a power line, do not climb the pole or a nearby tree to retrieve it. Call your local electric provider.

- Keep radios and other electrical appliances at least 10 feet from a pool. If water splashes on them, it can conduct electricity. Remember water is a conductor!

- Call before you dig. Before you decide to landscape your yard, make sure there are no power lines or any other utility lines where you'll be digging.

Our youth are very important to us at Clarke-Washington EMC. We are proud to expose them to opportunities that will challenge them to become better leaders and citizens of our future.

The Washington County Junior Livestock Association held their annual Steer and Heifer show and sale, Monday, April 2 at the 4-H Arena in Chatom. Twelve youth participated in the show and there was a good turnout of parents, friends and community supporters. Each winner received a cash prize and trophy.

In March, we sent Blake Odom and Dustin Odom, seniors at Fruitdale High School, to the annual Alabama Rural Electric Association Youth Tour in Montgomery. Youth Tour is a chance for rural youth to visit our State Capitol and its historical sites. They network with other rural Alabama students and learn about leadership, state government and their role with the rural electric cooperatives.


Relay for Life fundraising campaigns are ongoing here in our area. Thomasville and Grove Hill both had very successful campsite events and we expect nothing less from Jackson, on Friday, May 4, and Washington County, on Friday, May 11.

Thank you for responding to our Capital Credit Checks notice in April's magazine. If your name was on the list and you have yet to call, please do so and receive your refund.



Stan Wilson

is the General Manager/CEO of Clarke Washington Electric Membership Corporation




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**To report
a power
outage, call
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Cooperatives

democracy in action

FRUITDALE STUDENTS ATTEND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE YOUTH TOUR

Blake Odom and Dustin Odom, seniors at Fruitdale High School represented Clarke-Washington EMC at the annual Alabama Rural Electric Association Youth Tour in Montgomery, Tuesday through Thursday, March 13-15.

More than 125 students and chaperones from rural electric cooperatives all over Alabama gathered in Montgomery for the event.

Students listened and interacted with speakers on topics of self motivation, leadership, and also heard an introduction to Alabama legislation from a current state representative and state senator. They also learned more about the importance of rural electric cooperatives.

Wednesday and Thursday students and chaperones toured many of the capital city's landmarks: State Department of Archives and History, the Rosa Parks Museum, the Alabama Capitol and State House. But it wasn't all business as a night of cosmic bowling, some free time and ice breaker games maintained the balance of fun and learning.

"Youth Tour taught me about the fine points of leadership and self motivation." Dustin said. "It was a lot of fun and I enjoyed learning more about the history of our state and the importance of electric cooperatives. I was inspired to be a better leader and individual."

These students represent the rural areas of Alabama where rural

electric cooperatives, like Clarke-Washington EMC, supply power lines, giving rural Alabamians urban conveniences.

"By attending Youth Tour, I gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of Alabama history and state government," Blake said. "We made a lot of new friends and were encouraged by the number of students from rural area cooperatives just like us striving to be better citizens."

Dustin plans to attend Troy University in the fall and major in Chemistry, and Blake will travel a little farther East to major in pre-pharmacy at Auburn University.

"It is always a privilege to send rural youth from our area to participate in the Montgomery Youth Tour each year," said Stan Wilson, Manager of Clarke-Washington EMC. "These students are challenged to become better leaders and citizens for the future of our community and

state. It feels good to know Clarke-Washington has contributed in improving the future by investing in the lives of our students today."

This event allows high school juniors and seniors from rural Alabama to meet together and learn about rural electric cooperatives, leadership, Alabama history and state legislation, and how they all work together to make a better community.



Blake Odom and Dustin Odom, seniors at Fruitdale High School represented Clarke-Washington EMC at the annual AREA Youth Tour in Montgomery, Tuesday through Thursday, March 13-15.

Washington County Junior Livestock

The Washington County Junior Livestock Association's annual steer and heifer show and sale is an opportunity for youth to fulfill the 4-H motto "learning by doing."

On Monday, April 2 the show began at 5 p.m. at the 4-H Arena in Chatom, with the sale following. Twelve youth participated in the event which has been ongoing for more than 35 years. This event is organized by the Washington County Extension office, volunteers and the hard work of the Washington County Junior Livestock Association.

Contestants are judged on showmanship and weight of their steer or heifer. Showmanship determines how well the youth has prepared their animal for the show and their ability to control it in the ring with the judge. The weight category judges the youth's heifer or steer that has the highest average daily gain and will yield the highest quality cut of meat.

This year's judge was Van Smith, a retired agri-science teacher and assistant principal in Billingsley.

Payton Williams of Fruitdale took

home the top two trophies: one for Grand Champion Heifer and another for her Grand Champion Steer. Both animals were county-fed and were raised at Stover Farms in Fruitdale.

Williams also won first-place ribbons in the following categories: junior showmanship; junior and senior heifer divisions; best county bred heifer and steer; and heavy weight steer.

Other first place winners: Hannah Dorman for first-time showmanship and lightweight steer; Bailey Coaker for reserve champion heifer; Victoria Stewart for highest average daily gain – steer; Dalton Tate for middle weight steer and senior showmanship; and Katie Cotton for middle heavy weight steer and reserve champion steer.

When the show was finished auctioneer Moley Herring got the sale started as local businesses bid on the top steers. Proceeds from each sale go back into the pockets of the young contestants.

This is not just a one-night event. Contestants purchase their steers or heifers and are officially weighed by the end of September. From September until April contestants feed and work with their animals in

preparation for the spring show.

The Washington County Junior Livestock Association is composed of about 30 youth and adults. This organization is another "learning by doing" opportunity. Adults and youth work together throughout the year and to plan the spring show. Youth learn how to conduct a meeting, elect officers, and see first-hand what it takes to plan, organize and implement a project. They also help with arena clean-up days. This year they planned a showmanship workshop to help new contestants that had entered the show for the first time.

This event wouldn't be such a success without the financial support of sponsors. Junior livestock members were challenged to raise funds for the association and show. Bailey Coaker raised more than \$800 and received a \$50 gift card to Wal-Mart for her hard work.

Clarke-Washington EMC has supported the show and sale for many years. We are proud to be involved with an organization like Washington County Extension office and the Washington County Junior Livestock Association that promote responsibility and confidence in our youth. Congratulations to all the winners.



Washington County Junior Livestock Association heifer and steer show participants: First row – Payton Williams, Bailey Coaker, Emily Williams, Allison Butts, Parker Thompson, Katie Cotton and Hannah Sullivan Second row – Hannah Dorman, Andrea Butts, Samuel Turner, Victoria Stewart and Dalton Tate

Association's Show and Sale



Payton Williams with her Grand Champion Heifer and show judge Van Smith.



Payton Williams with her Grand Champion Steer and show judge Van Smith.



Bailey Coaker with her Reserve Champion Heifer and Emily Williams holding the heifer's calf with ringmaster Ken Kelly.



Katie Cotton with her Reserve Champion Steer and ringmaster Ken Kelly.



Senior showmanship winner is Dalton Tate with Steve Asbill.



Victoria Stewart's steer had the Highest Daily Gain with Richard Dorman of Dorman Feed in Chatom.

MAY IS NATIONAL ELECTRIC SAFETY MONTH

Top electrical hazards during the summer are often related to storms. Lightning strikes, power outages and electrical hazards in the aftermath of storms are often the causes of deaths and injuries during summer months.

Hot weather brings increased use of air conditioners. Contact with electric currents from air conditioners accounts for a significant number of electrocutions and electrical injuries annually. Remembering to “test before you touch” can avoid deaths, injuries and economic losses due to electrical hazards.

Water and electricity don't mix.

Be aware of the dangers that are present when water comes in contact with electricity. To reduce electrical hazards, see the safety advice below:

- Staying at least 10 feet away from overhead power lines can help prevent lethal electrical hazards.
- Use outlet covers on outdoor receptacles near swimming pools. Keep cords and electrical devices away from pools. Never handle electrical items when you are wet.
- Electrical devices such as circuit breakers, fuses, GFCIs, receptacles, plugs and switches can malfunction when water and silt get inside. Replace those that have been submerged.
- Do not allow power cord connections to become wet.
- Outdoors, dangers such as power lines in contact with water

can pose electrical hazards.

- Indoors, submerged outlets or electrical cords may be energizing the water, a potential lethal trap.

- Before flipping a switch or plugging in an appliance, have an electrician check the house wiring and appliance to make sure it is safe to use.

- When using a wet-dry vacuum cleaner or a pressure washer, be sure to follow the manufacturer's instructions to avoid electric shock.

Summer safety facts & statistics:

- As many as 100 people are killed each year by lightning, usually more than hurricanes and tornados combined.

- Approximately 500 people are injured by lightning every year. Many lightning injuries carry long-term, debilitating symptoms.

- Lightning causes more than 26,000 fires annually and property damage over \$5 billion annually.

- Floods are the deadliest natural disaster, responsible for an average of 100 deaths each year and \$2 billion in property damage. Floods are also a cause of electrical hazards, such as energized water due to submerged electrical lines or receptacles, and water damaged electrical equipment.

- Large appliances, such as air conditioners, are responsible for almost 20 percent of consumer product electrocutions each year. Remember to “test before you touch.”

Source: ESFi Electrical Safety Foundation International

LOCAL RELAY FOR LIFE EVENTS:

Jackson – Friday, May 4 Washington County – Friday, May 11

COOKING UP A CURE™

\$15. All proceeds will go to Relay for Life

A collection of recipes, tips and cancer facts, etc. from Clarke-Washington EMC members and friends. Call or come by to get your copy. 1-800-323-9081.

THOMPSON CENTER FIRE RIFLE

\$1 donation for a chance to win a Thompson Center Fire Rifle. Your choice of Caliber from Jackson True Value. Drawing to be held at Washington County Relay for Life campsite on Friday, May 11. Come by the office to purchase your chance or see a Clarke-Washington EMC employee.

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