

# NEWS



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## Power On: October is National Co-op Month

**A**s an electric cooperative, our top priority is always to provide reliable, affordable energy to you, the consumer-members we serve. Because we are a co-op, our mission is to enrich the lives of our members and serve the long-term interests of our local community—and this mission has never been more critical than in recent months. One of the seven principles that guides all co-ops is “concern for community.” To me, this principle is the essential DNA of Tri-County EMC and it sets us apart from other electric utilities.

October is National Co-op Month, and electric cooperatives across the country are highlighting the many ways we “Power On.” Keeping this theme in mind, I recognize the essential role we play in serving a special community like ours.

Who would have fathomed in March, that the COVID-19 virus would amount to a test of our community and our nation? The changing circumstances due to the pandemic have created both challenges and opportunities. Over the past several months, we’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and Tri-County EMC has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.

As an essential service, and to ensure reliability of your power supply, we modified our operations to safeguard business continuity. Our line crews worked on staggered schedules to maintain separation. In the office, we limited and modified meetings and

gatherings to allow for safe separation. We also closed our lobby to walk-in traffic. For the health and safety of everyone, we think these measures were the prudent course of action for the times.

For our members impacted by COVID-19 who needed help with their electric bills, we waived late fees and worked with those hardest-hit to make special payment arrangements.

And while we certainly missed visiting with you in person, we found new ways to stay connected through our drive-thru and electronically with arranging new services.

I tell you about all of these efforts not to boast about Tri-County EMC but to explain how much we care about this community—because we live here too.

We’ve seen other local businesses rising to meet similar challenges during this time, because that’s what communities do. While the challenges caused by COVID-19 have been daunting, I’m heartened to see how everyone is pulling together.

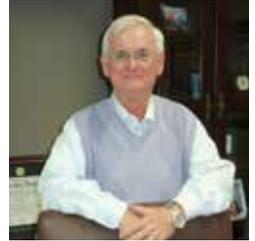
*We’ve all been challenged to operate differently, and Tri-County EMC has stepped up to help our members and strengthen the safety net for our more vulnerable neighbors.*



## Manager's Message:

# Annual Meeting Changes

**J. Michael Davis**  
General Manager



**F**or years, Tri-County EMC has conducted our annual meeting of the members without interruption. While the location may have changed, the agenda has always been the same. We come together as a cooperative and enjoy food, fellowship and good entertainment, followed by a business meeting, elections and an address from the general manager.

This year, the coronavirus pandemic has posed a challenge to that tradition. The safety of our members

and employees is always the highest priority at Tri-County EMC, and it quickly became apparent to the board of directors there was no safe way to hold this year's annual meeting in the usual format.

Typically, over 1,000 members attend the meeting. Even hosting it at a facility the size of the Kornegay Arena, there is no way to welcome that many people while observing the necessary social distancing protocols to keep our members safe.

However, the annual meeting is too important for it to simply be canceled. It isn't just a great opportunity for us to come together as a community, but it is also part of the cooperative's core mission.

Democratic member control is one of our guiding principles, and there is no better demonstration of that concept than the annual meeting. While there, members can voice their ideas and concerns directly to cooperative leaders and cast their votes for who they think should represent them on the board of trustees.

In order to preserve member participation while still protecting our community, Tri-County EMC's leadership and board decided to hold this year's annual meeting in a new drive-thru format. With this change, the live entertainment and general manager's address will not be included in this format. However, the general manager's address will be included in next month's annual report.

Each member will still be included in a drawing for door prizes, receive a registration bag and \$10.

We know these changes may inconvenience some members, but rest assured we are taking every step to make sure the process runs smoothly. Local enforcement will be present to help direct traffic, and cooperative employees will be positioned all along the traffic route to answer any questions you may have.

By holding a drive-thru annual meeting, Tri-County EMC will ensure that our members' democratic control of their cooperative is not jeopardized, while also protecting their health and safety. We look forward to seeing all of you next month.

### YOU'RE INVITED!

## 2020 Drive-Thru Annual Meeting

With the health and welfare of our members and employees in mind, Tri-County EMC will change the format of its 2020 Annual Meeting.

Instead of the traditional in-person meeting, a drive-thru meeting will take place on Saturday, November 14, between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. at Tri-County EMC corporate headquarters in Dudley, NC. Tri-County EMC asks members **NOT TO ARRIVE BEFORE 9 A.M.**

Members can register for the meeting and vote without leaving their vehicle. Each member who registers will receive \$10 and a registration gift bag that includes a TCEMC cap, a calendar, hand sanitizer, antibacterial pen, disposable antibacterial wipe and a touch-free tool opener.

Tri-County EMC will also hold a prize drawing to give out eighty \$80 gift certificates (bill credits) for electricity. The drawing will be held live on Tri-County EMC's Facebook page, with the winners to be published in the next edition of the *Carolina Country Magazine*.

### DRIVE-THRU REGISTRATION PROCESS



- STEP 1:** Enter Tri-County EMC's office off Hwy 117 Alternate
- STEP 2:** Follow signs/direction to registration lanes
- STEP 3:** Members will register at stop 1
- STEP 4:** Members will complete prize drawing card at stop 2
- STEP 5:** Members will vote at stop 3
- STEP 6:** Members will receive registration gift at stop 4
- STEP 7:** Follow signs/direction to exit Tri-County EMC's office on Hwy 117 Alternate

# Bylaws relevant to the qualifications, nominations and elections of members to your EMC's Board of Directors

## Board Nominees for 2020

With the forthcoming Annual Meeting, the Nominating Committee met in September and made nominations for terms as follows:

### District 1—Duplin County

(Vote for two)

- Carl Kornegay, Jr. (3-yr term)
- Keith Beavers (3-yr term)

### District 2—Wayne County

(Vote for one)

- Randy McCullen (3-yr term)

### District 3: Lenoir County

(Vote for one)

- Brandy Rouse (3-yr term)

No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of, or to hold any other position of trust in, the Cooperative who is not at least eighteen (18) years old or is in any way employed by or financially interested in a competing enterprise or a business selling electric energy or supplies to the Cooperative.

Notwithstanding the restrictive provisions of this Section based upon close relative relationships, no incumbent director shall lose eligibility to remain a director or to be reelected a director if, during his incumbency, he becomes a close relative or another incumbent director or of a Cooperative employee because of a marriage or an adoption to which he was not a party.

Upon establishment of the fact that a person nominated for director by the Nominating Committee lacks eligibility under this section or as may be provided elsewhere in these Bylaws, it shall be the duty of the Board to disqualify him. Upon the establishment of the fact that any person being considered for or already holding, a directorship or other position of trust in the Cooperative lacks eligibility under this Section, it shall be the duty of the Board to withhold such position from such person, or to cause him to be removed therefrom, as the case may be, except that, in the case of a nominee for director from the floor, this duty shall be that of the chairman of the meeting and, in the case

**SECTION 4.02. QUALIFICATIONS.** No person shall be eligible to become or remain a director of the cooperative who: (a) while serving on the board or during the five (5) years preceding his nomination thereto shall have been finally adjudged to be guilty of a felony; or (b) becomes, or at any time during the five (5) years preceding his nomination shall have been employed by (or be a close relative of a person who becomes, or at any time within the preceding five (5) years shall have been employed by) a labor union which represents or has represented, or has endeavored to represent any employees of the cooperative; or (c) is and if elected and seated as a director will continue to be, a close relative of an incumbent director or of an employee of the Cooperative; (d) has not continuously been, for at least one (1) year prior to his nomination, or who ceases after his election to be, a member on good standing of the Cooperative, receiving service there from at his primary residential abode in the Directorate District from which he is elected., (except as provided hereinafter in the first proviso in this Section, in which instance the entity which qualifies a person's eligibility to be elected a director must be and remain in good standing).

of an existing employee other than the general manager, this duty shall be that of the general manager. Also, the office of a director shall automatically become vacant if he misses as many as three (3) regular meetings of the Board during any twelve (12) consecutive such meetings, unless the remaining directors unanimously resolve that (1) there was good cause for such absences and (2) such cause will not likely result in such absences during the next ensuring twelve (12) consecutive regular Board meetings. Nothing contained in this Section shall, or shall be construed to, affect in any manner whatsoever the validity of any action taken at any meeting of the Board, unless such action is taken with respect to a matter in which one or more of the directors have a personal interest in conflict with that of the Cooperative.

**SECTION 4.03. ELECTION.** At each annual meeting of the members, Directors shall be elected by secret written ballot or secret electronic voting by the members, and, except as provided in the first provision of Section 4.02 of these Bylaws, from among natural persons who are members; PROVIDED, when the number of nominees does not exceed the number of directors to be elected for a particular Directorate balloting shall be dispensed within respect of that District and voting may be conducted in any other proper manner. Whenever there are two or more candidates for the same directorship, the one receiving the highest number of votes shall win. Drawing by lot shall resolve, where necessary, any tie votes.

**SECTION 4.06. NOMINATIONS.** It shall be the duty of the Board to appoint, not less than forty (40) nor more than ninety (90) days prior to the date of a meeting of the members at which directors are to be elected, a Nominating Committee, consisting of an uneven number of cooperative members, not less than five (5) nor more than eleven (11), who are not

existing Cooperative employees, agents, officers, directors or known candidates for directors, who are not close relatives or members of the same household of any such person; and who are so selected that each of the Cooperative's Directorate Districts shall have representative(s) thereon in proportion to the minimum number of directors to which such District is entitled to have representation on the Board. The Committee shall prepare and post at the principal office of the Cooperative, at least twenty-five (25) days before the meeting, a list of nominations for directors to be elected, listing separately the nominee(s) for each Directorate District for which one or two directors must, pursuant to this Article, be elected at the meeting. The Committee shall nominate one or more candidates for each directorate office to be filled, but it shall not make a nomination until it shall have first determined that the nominee is qualified to serve in accordance with the provisions of section 4.02 and, if elected, will serve. A number of members of the Cooperative, equal to one-half of 1 percent (1/2%) of the membership of the Cooperative as of January 1st of the year in which the election is to be held, acting together, may make additional nominations in writing over their signatures, listing their nominee(s) in like manner and filing the same with the cooperative not less than twenty (20) days prior to the meeting. The Secretary shall post such nominations at the same place where the list of nominations made by the Committee is posted. The Secretary shall mail to the members with the notice of the meeting, or separately, but at least seven (7) days prior to the date of the meeting, a statement of the names and addresses of all nominee(s) for each Directorate District for which a director must be elected, distinguishing clearly those nominated by the Committee and those nominated by petition, if any.

# Don't be Spooked by Scams!



This Halloween, and year-round, remember the following tips to help avoid the costly effects of being duped by scammers posing to be Tri-County EMC:

- Your co-op will never demand payment over the phone.
- If you receive a call, do not give out personal information such as your credit card number, account number or Social Security number. Hang up and call Tri-County EMC to verify your account status.
- Don't open suspicious emails. Instead, call Tri-County EMC to report questionable activity.
- Don't be rushed or pressured by a threatening caller. Hang up and take time to contact Tri-County EMC and verify information.

## Early Bird Bright Ideas Winners Announced

**Congratulations to Harley Smith of North Lenoir High School. He was one of five educators who received a \$100 Visa gift card for submitting their Bright Ideas applications by August 15!**



### Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month:

The average household owns 24 electronic products, which account for roughly 12% of home energy use. When shopping for electronics, consider purchasing ENERGY-STAR®-certified products, which can be 70% more efficient than conventional models.

Source: [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov)



**Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation**  
A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Tri-County EMC Membership Corporation in Dudley, N.C., was chartered May 8, 1940.

#### Mission Statement:

Tri-County Electric Membership Corporation is a member-driven cooperative committed to providing reliable electric power at a reasonable cost, to offering superior service, and to taking an active role in supporting the communities it serves.

**We are here to serve you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year.**

**For Outages or Emergencies:**  
919-735-2611 or 1-800-548-4869

[tcemc.com](http://tcemc.com)

**J. Michael Davis**  
General Manager

#### Management Staff

**Kenneth E. Davis, Jr., CPA**  
Manager, Finance & Administration

**Robert B. Kornegay**  
Manager, Member Services

**Deidra Grantham, Editor**  
Manager, Marketing and Communications

**Tony Grantham, P. E.**  
Manager, Engineering

**Michael Wood**  
Manager, Operations

**Tamah Hughes**  
Manager, Information Technology

#### Board of Directors

**Carl W. Kornegay, Jr**  
President

**Jennings Outlaw**  
Vice President

**William H. Farmer, Jr**  
Secretary

**David Vinson**  
Treasurer

**Keith Beavers**  
Dallace Grady

**Jeff Henderson**  
Patrick Lynch

**Randy McCullen**  
Worth Overman

**Brandy Rouse**

#### Employee of the month



**Ricky Richardson**

Ricky Richardson is one of 47 employees ready to serve you. He has worked with Tri-County EMC since March 11, 2008, as a foreman for the cooperative. Ricky resides in Pikeville.