



www.blueridge.coop

FOR ALL YOUR CUSTOMER SERVICE NEEDS

Call Toll-Free (800) 240-3400

AUTOMATED OUTAGE REPORTING
1-888-BLUE RIDGE

PICKENS
P.O. Box 277
734 West Main St.
Pickens, SC 29671

OCONEE
P.O. Box 329
2328 Sandifer Blvd.
Highway 123
Westminster, SC 29693

MISSION STATEMENT
Blue Ridge will be a competitive, quality provider of energy and other services, maintaining its history of integrity and adapting to the challenges of a changing world. While exercising leadership in the community, the organization's focus will be on exceeding customer expectations.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Kenneth G. Southerlin, *Chairman*
J. Mendel Stone,
Vice-Chairman
Joel R. Davis, *Secretary*
Joel Spencer Dalton, Jr., *Treasurer*
Ben G. Bolt
Jimmy Lee Dodgens
William G. Elrod
Franklin M. Looper, Jr.
Len D. Talley

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Jim Lovinggood



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Capital credits and the Co-op Connections Card



AS A MEMBER-OWNED UTILITY, the Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative team takes pride in bringing value-added service to our members. One of the means we have for making that happen is the Co-op Connections Card (CCC).

This card provides opportunities for members to take advantage of discounts offered by a variety of merchants, restaurants, lodging facilities, and other commercial establishments. Participating businesses include those on the local level, as well as national chains. A listing of area participants is found elsewhere in this month's magazine pages.

\$252,000 in savings

One particular purchase category that we closely track calculates the monthly pharmacy discounts that members enjoy through use of their CCC. In 2017, for instance, Blue Ridge members who employed their CCC saw \$252,000 in total prescription-medicine savings. Since the CCC's introduction in 2009, those accumulated savings have grown to \$3,749,000.

The cooperative's intention is to place a Co-op Connections Card into the hands of every member. If you don't already have yours, I'd encourage you to contact us. We'll be glad to get one to you.

Checks totaling \$1 million

While I'm on the subject of dollars and cents, I want to mention that Blue Ridge will be making another refund of capital

credits in April. In what will be our 36th consecutive annual payment of these dividends, checks totaling \$1,000,000 will be put into the mail. With this latest disbursement of these funds, the cooperative will have returned a total of \$26.2 million to members over the years.

Capital credits represent one of the unique features of the member-owned business model. Both the Blue Ridge board of directors and our management staff believe strongly that we should operate in accordance with that not-for-profit cooperative principle. Our goal is to continue retiring capital credits on a regular cycle. That will be our practice each year as the organization's financial picture permits us to do so.

Annual Meeting and Blue Ridge Fest

Each spring, two special events are on our calendars, and I hope they're on yours. The annual meeting will be held Thursday, April 26 and Blue Ridge Fest is scheduled for Friday, May 4. Read all about the 21st edition of Blue Ridge Fest in these pages, and look for all the details of the annual meeting next month. I look forward to seeing you at both.

JIM LOVINGGOOD
President and CEO

Co-op Connections program continues to grow

THE CO-OP CONNECTIONS PROGRAM has proven to be a worthy savings program for Blue Ridge members and employees. Since May 2009, Blue Ridge members have saved over \$3.7 million dollars on prescription medications alone. Blue Ridge is among the top in the nation out of all participating co-ops for prescription savings. Combine that with savings at local retailers and the number continues to grow. If you haven't used your card, take a look at the list of business participants and start saving today! We have welcomed a number of new businesses to the program. Visit them and enjoy the savings!



Co-op Connections List

Anderson

- ▶ **America's Best Value Inn**—20 percent off rack rate
- ▶ **Diamonds-n-Gold Direct**—20 percent off repair; 10 percent off regular-price jewelry
- ▶ **El Jimador Restaurant**—10 percent off
- ▶ **Maynard's Home Furnishings**—\$100 off purchase of \$750 or more
- ▶ **M & L Mobile Home Supplies**—10 percent off parts
- ▶ **Postage Plus**—\$1 off a book of stamps
- ▶ **Sharps and Flats Unlimited Recording Studio**—10 percent off recording time hourly rates
- ▶ **Sunday's Restaurant**—15 percent off purchase

Central

- ▶ **Fresh Bet Home Fragrances**—10 percent off select fragrances
- ▶ **Newton Shoes**—5 percent off Newton price
- ▶ **Palmetto Pizza Co.**—10 percent off total purchase-not valid w/other discounts
- ▶ **Xpress Lube and Car Wash**—Save \$2 on full-service oil change

Clemson

- ▶ **Curves**—50 percent off service fee w/12-month check draft for new members
- ▶ **El Jimador Restaurant**—10 percent off
- ▶ **My Garage by Essex**—Special offers
- ▶ **Valvoline Instant Oil Change**—10 percent off all services and parts

Easley

- ▶ **Acme Auto Care**—10 percent off all repairs

- ▶ **Baymont Inn & Suites**—\$59.99 rate
- ▶ **Black Electrical**—5 percent discount on total purchase
- ▶ **Days Inn**—15 percent off rack rates
- ▶ **DreamShots Photography, LLC**—15 percent discount any wedding pkg.
- ▶ **Easley Electric Inc.**—10 percent off—must present card
- ▶ **Quick Copy/Print Center**—10 percent off print or copy
- ▶ **Rail and Spike Trains**—10 percent off train items; 20 percent off Thomas the Tank
- ▶ **Steve's Tire & Service Center, Inc.**—5 percent off purchase of any set of 4 tires

Long Creek

- ▶ **Chattooga Whitewater Outfitters**—\$5 off any river trip or equipment rental

Maggie Valley, NC

- ▶ **Clarketon Motel**—Discounted stays; call for rate

Pendleton

- ▶ **Mountain Made**—10 percent off one craft item
- ▶ **Timeless Tours & Travel, LLC**—Call for discounted rates

Pickens

- ▶ **Auntie Ann's Kitchen**—10 percent off
- ▶ **Aunt Sue's Country Corner Restaurant**—15 percent off all purchases
- ▶ **Flowers & Gifts by Virginia**—20 percent off
- ▶ **Town & Country Florist**—10 percent off excluding delivery

Seneca

- ▶ **Chastain Insurance Agency**—5 percent off home and auto insurance
- ▶ **Clemson 4 Wheel Center, Inc.**—5 percent off excluding labor and shipping
- ▶ **DJ's Pools and Spas**—10 percent off chemicals-in store purchases
- ▶ **Heavenly Hogs BBQ & More, LLC**—free drink w/any dinner plate; dine-in only
- ▶ **Hidden Treasures**—10 percent off
- ▶ **Quality Inn**—\$69.99 plus tax per night
- ▶ **Los Amigos Mexican Restaurant**—5 percent off full purchase
- ▶ **Oasis Pools, Inc.**—10 percent off all chemicals; free pool cleaner with pool purchase

Travelers Rest

- ▶ **B's Cleaning Service LLC**—10 percent off initial cleaning

West Union

- ▶ **Arbonne Skin Care & Nutrition**—20 percent off for new customers
- ▶ **Holcomb's Office Supply**—20 percent off purchase

Westminster

- ▶ **Garrett Repair & Remodeling**—20 percent off reg. labor rate on service calls-also \$275 roof attic fan includes materials and labor
- ▶ **Magnolia Bed & Breakfast**—10 percent off lodging or event/wedding packages
- ▶ **The Lodge at Foxwood Hills**—10 percent off ticket



New substation energized

IN LATE JANUARY, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative applied electrical load to its brand new substation in Anderson County’s Piercetown community. The Piercetown facility is replacing an existing metering point. That unit did not allow for the additional circuit that was needed to supply service to the commercial, industrial, and residential members that have settled there in recent years. Vice-President of Engineering Mark Waters explains, “Although the capacity has not changed, we needed space to add an additional circuit for that area.” Located near the intersection of Interstate 85 and S.C. Highway 81, the substation now has five backbone circuits that are taking power into a wide portion of co-op territory serving 2,123 co-op members.

At present, the station has a circuit dedicated to serving the nearby Techtronic Industries North America (TTI) campus. With a distribution center already in operation and a testing lab now under construction, TTI reportedly has even bigger plans for its spacious tract of land. The co-op is prepared to

Anderson Director, Ben Bolt, stands in front of the new Piercetown Substation. This new structure will allow additional circuits to serve the residential and industrial members in the area. Techtronic Industries North America is one of the newest industrial members served by the co-op. With additional growth projected for the near future, they may require two circuits to serve their needs.

make a second dedicated circuit available to TTI, should the firm see further growth in its need for electricity.

Blue Ridge officials have also made preliminary plans to erect a second substation immediately adjacent to the new Piercetown station, should even greater industrial expansion warrant. Co-op President and CEO Jim Lovinggood noted that this particular I-85 interchange appeared poised for even more commercial and industrial development. “At Blue Ridge, we’ve always prided ourselves with our determination to stay ahead of electrical-load growth on the co-op grid. We’re maintaining a watchful eye as events continue to unfold in this geographical section. Our focus continues to be on providing the kind of service reliability our members have come to expect.”

GET THE MESSAGE!

Sign up today and help



We’ll send you a message when we expect heavy electricity use. You can save energy—and help us all save money—if we reduce peak power use.

On “peak” days, we’ll contact you via your choice:



LET’S SAVE ENERGY—TOGETHER.



Watch our video to learn more.

EnergySmartSC.org