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MISSION STATEMENT
 Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative will operate as a competitive provider of energy services and a partner with local communities, with a focus on safety, service and integrity.

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This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Progress on multiple fronts

AS I'M PREPARING this report, our Upcountry Fiber partnership with West Carolina Telephone

Cooperative is fast closing in on a customer count of 10,000. In my book, that's some impressive growth! It was in February of 2021 that we connected our very first broadband applicant. Since then, the system has expanded by leaps and bounds.

I don't foresee any letup in this pattern of forward progress. Our installation crews in the field continue to press on with their work. Consequently, we're expecting to reach the end of 2023 with our having completed at least 50% of our projected buildout.

Among America's fastest growing

From the information I have at hand, I believe I can safely state that Upcountry Fiber would rank among America's fastest-growing high-speed internet operations. At the outset, we made a commitment that we would extend fiber-to-the-premises service as rapidly as we possibly could to as many subscribers as we could. In addition, we're doing so with an attractive pricing structure. Eventually, we expect every part of South Carolina's northwestern corner to be on the receiving end of the very best in quality broadband service.

This current year is also going to be another one that will be characterized by notable forward strides on the electric side of our business. For example, work has commenced on a rebuild of the high-voltage transmission line that feeds the co-op's Mountain Rest substation in Oconee County. Initiated in conjunction with our wholesale-energy supplier, Central Electric Power Cooperative, this project is designed to enhance service to our members who are located within this mountainous region.

The various aspects of this major endeavor are too numerous for me to cover in this report. I'll simply note that this work represents the kind of steps Blue Ridge is committed to take in order to ensure a dependable flow of power to any and all our members.

Strengthening service levels

As outlined in the cooperative's 2023 Work Plan and Budget, numerous construction jobs are scheduled that will accommodate further growth on our power-delivery system. At the same time, many other projects will get started with the goal of strengthening service levels for existing members in multiple portions of our assigned territory.

I believe I can speak for the entire Blue Ridge workforce when I submit that we're particularly blessed to be serving in South Carolina's Upstate. This is a beautiful part of the world, and residing in this particular area are some of the finest people to be found on planet Earth. Those realities provide ample motivation for us to keep on striving toward getting better at what we do.

JIM LOVINGGOOD
 President and CEO

Billing adjustment

A two-cents-per kilowatt-hour surcharge from our wholesale supplier will be applied to bills beginning with the May billing.

Blue Ridge linemen place second in rodeo

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

THREE BLUE RIDGE ELECTRIC Cooperative linemen joined lineworkers from around the state in showcasing their skills for family, friends and colleagues at the 2023 South Carolina Lineman's Rodeo.

Blue Ridge Electric's crew of Jacob Kelley, Michael Sims and Anson Perry placed second overall in the journeyman division and third in the Digger Derrick Obstacle Course event.

Sponsored by The Electric Cooperatives of South Carolina, the event took place at Palmetto Electric's Ridgeland campus in March and featured 126 lineworkers representing 14 electric cooperatives.

"I'm really proud of those guys," says David Black, manager of safety and loss control for Blue Ridge Electric. "They didn't have a lot of time to practice, so to go down there and finish second is really impressive."

Rodeo activities began with a special flag-raising ceremony



Blue Ridge Electric's journeyman team of Michael Sims, Anson Perry and Jacob Kelley placed second overall in their division at the South Carolina Lineman's Rodeo.

that featured lineworkers from each participating co-op climbing a pole to mount the American, South Carolina and Touchstone Energy Cooperatives flags. Lineworkers competed in other events such as Cutout & Arrestor Changeout, Double Crossarm Changeout and the GFC Relay.

Volunteers and family members from various co-ops were there to show their support. The cooperative-affiliated community outreach group WIRE (Women Involved In Rural Electrification) raised \$1,250 for the Chavis House at Burn Centers of America in Augusta, which has treated many linemen over the years.

BLUE RIDGE Electric Co-op

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