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**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.

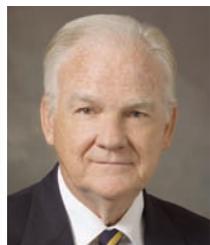
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## Hoping for a milder winter

WE'VE JUST WELCOMED the beginning of 2011, and I've started thinking about what the next 12 months might hold in store. Forecasters are saying the current La Niña weather pattern will mean a warmer and dryer winter for Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative country. After the harsh winter of 2009-10, a more-moderate season would be a welcome relief. That's especially true now, since much of last month, December 2010, was also brutally cold.



Here at Blue Ridge, we have long memories when it comes to the weather. Last year's winter sticks in our minds because we were subjected to three full months of winter-like conditions.

### Bone-chilling

December 2009's average temperatures were seven percent colder than normal. Next, from late that December through the middle of January, our service area endured three solid weeks of bone-chilling thermometer readings. Then, February produced another month of below-normal temperatures. I had never in my life been so happy to see the warming winds of March arrive.

To add insult to injury, this area experienced more than its share of hot, sticky days last summer. As I've

observed on a number of occasions, energy use—particularly residential energy use—is largely weather-driven. Extreme cold makes heating systems work harder, while excessive heat has a similar effect on air conditioners.

### Double whammy

The double whammy that hit Blue Ridge members' electric bills last year causes me to applaud the prospect of a milder winter. I hope the meteorologists prove to be on-target with their outlook.

One for-certain piece of information I can pass along is that the cooperative's per-kilowatt-hour price for electricity remains unchanged. The last adjustment in our retail rates occurred back in 2008.

Something else that hasn't changed is the Blue Ridge commitment to quality service. In spite of the lengthy economic downturn, the cooperative has continued to make extensive improvements to its power-delivery facilities. We're pressing forward in that area because we want all our members to enjoy even better value-added service.

**Charles E. Dalton**  
*President and CEO*



## Acting out life's lessons



Jack and Patti Billingsley enjoy the campus of North Greenville University and admire the newly finished Billingsley Theatre that is dedicated in honor of their family.

**NORTH GREENVILLE UNIVERSITY** has one of the most beautiful campuses of any college in South Carolina. It is nestled in the mountains of northern Greenville County in the small, unincorporated town of Tigerville. This fall, there was added excitement as students in the school's theater department prepared for the production of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* ... *A Ghost Story of Christmas*. Prior to the performance on November 11, the university's new performing-arts building, The Billingsley Theatre, was dedicated. This facility is located in the emerging Village at Tigerville, adjacent to the campus. Across the street is the newly remodeled School of Theatre structure that was once Tigerville Elementary School.

For Blue Ridge members, Jack and Patti Billingsley, the day was

one of excitement and gratification. The theater was dedicated in honor of Jack's parents, W. S. and Frances Billingsley, and the commitment made by the entire Billingsley family to North Greenville University.

W. S. Billingsley was called into the ministry in 1944 at the age of 34. His fervent love for, and dependence upon, God led him to North Greenville to prepare for the Great Commission of preaching God's Word. He lived on campus with his wife, Frances, and two sons, Billy and Jack. Both children became active in the Tigerville community, and they lived there for seven years. "I give North Greenville the credit for changing the direction of my life and providing my family with the opportunity to follow the right path and succeed," Jack states. "When President Epting met with us about naming the theater

in my parents' honor, we were both humbled and grateful."

The Billingsley Theatre building features a theater that seats a maximum of 260. There is a long history of theater at North Greenville, stretching back decades. There are now 40 theater majors at the school. This year, there will be three main-stage shows, as well as two guest artists and a one-act play festival directed by theater majors. During the inaugural season, performances will include A. A. Milne's *Winnie the Pooh* and Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*. In the 2011-2012 school year, four main productions are scheduled.

Jack and Patti Billingsley are thrilled to see what North Greenville is doing by providing increasing opportunities for students. The theater is a huge advancement in theatrical study. "It's great to be a part of such a wonderful institution and to see the students and the community benefit from the addition to the university," Patti states. "The heritage and the legacy are here forever with the Billingsley name, and it brings great satisfaction to see such a deserving school continue to prosper."

For more information on productions and tickets, visit [theatre.ngu.edu](http://theatre.ngu.edu).



### WIRE offers \$2,500 scholarship for women

Applications are being taken for a \$2,500 scholarship for women awarded annually by WIRE, a community service organization affiliated with electric co-ops in South Carolina.

The WIRE Opportunity Scholarship is awarded to a woman who may not have been able to attend college when she graduated from high school but now wants to further her education. WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification) awards the scholarship based on financial need and personal goals.

#### Applicants must:

- ▶ be a member of a South Carolina electric co-op
- ▶ have graduated from high school or earned her GED at least 10 years ago

- ▶ be accepted into an accredited S.C. college or university, and
- ▶ demonstrate financial need.

Women who have previously obtained a four-year college degree are not eligible. Applicants may have previously earned a two-year degree or some college credits. The scholarship, which can be used for the fall 2011 or spring 2012 semesters, will be paid jointly to the winner and her college of choice.

Applications are available at Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative. The deadline to apply is June 1. Mail or fax the application to WIRE Scholarship Committee, Attention: Christy Overstreet, Marlboro Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 1057, Bennettsville, SC 29512; fax (843) 479-8990.