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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.

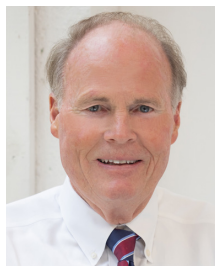
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
 Len D. Talley, *Chairman*  
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 Franklin M. Loofer, Jr., *Secretary*  
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**PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**  
 Jim Lovinggood

This organization is an equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



## All systems go

**THE FIRST UPCOUNTRY FIBER** customer had access to high-speed internet service more than four years ago. Today, thanks to a fruitful partner-

ship with West Carolina Telephone Cooperative, more than 22,000 households have access to this vital necessity spanning over 3,300 miles.

In the 1930s, at the urging of then-President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative and other co-ops answered the call to energize a failing economy and bring power to rural communities that no one else would serve. We went where no one else would.

Nearly 100 years later, Blue Ridge answered the community's pleas for reliable and high-speed internet when many were shuttered in their homes during the 2020 pandemic. In the moment, I heard stories of families sitting outside libraries for Wi-Fi to complete homework and remote workers attempting to get into coffee shops for internet access. We felt compelled to act, so we did, once again.

In the year ahead, our fiberoptic operations team tells me we plan to build 700 more miles of service—a sizable increase from the 480 miles constructed in 2024. Our expansion into Oconee County continues after the significant progress we made in the area last year. In Pickens County, crews will work throughout the Six Mile, Gap Hill, Easley, Liberty and Dacusville communities.

Beyond immediate construction, West Carolina underwent a leadership change

Interested in a stronger internet connection? Visit [upcountryfiber.com](http://upcountryfiber.com) or call (888) 760-2111.

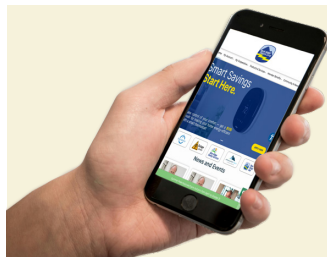
this year. Former president and CEO Jeff Wilson retired after a long and successful career, clearing the way for new CEO Chris Townsend.

Chris brings 30 years of telecommunications industry experience to West Carolina and Upcountry Fiber, having most recently served as the CEO of Dekalb Telephone Cooperative in Alexandria, Tennessee. As an industry leader, Chris also held important positions with the Tennessee Broadband Association and the Telecommunications Association of the Southeast. I'd like to wish his family a warm welcome to our area.

I'm optimistic about seeing what we will achieve with Chris now at the helm, and I'll always be grateful to have worked alongside Jeff in this bold endeavor.

This collaborative team has much to be proud of. But there's more work to be done, and it remains all systems go as we continue this buildout. The job is not finished.

**JIM LOVINGGOOD**  
 President and CEO



## Get connected

Are you signed up for Member Connections, the e-newsletter of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative? Visit [blueridge.coop/enews](http://blueridge.coop/enews) to get the latest news about your co-op and extreme weather!

# Annual Meeting draws over 6,000 members

THE 2025 Annual Meeting of Members of Blue Ridge Electric Cooperative saw more than 6,300 members participate in a drive-thru registration on Thursday, April 10, to claim their goodie bags, collect a door prize and vote on two bylaw changes. Brad Bright, of Westminster, won this year's grand prize—a 2018 Dodge Ram 1500 Crew Cab.

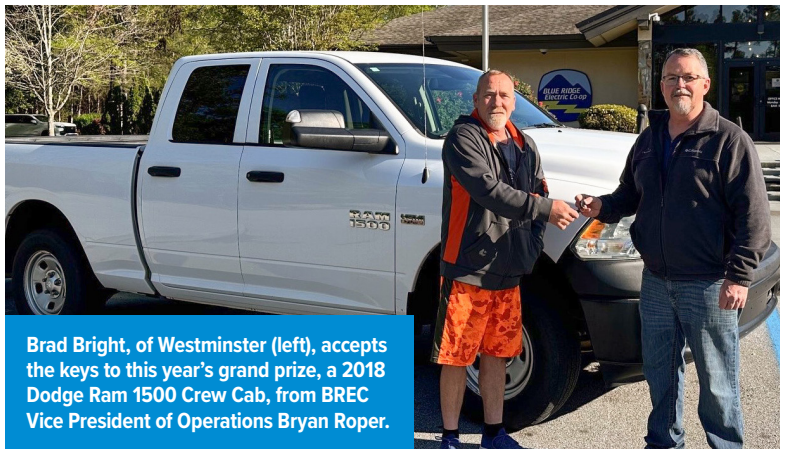
Reelected without opposition to new three-year terms were incumbent directors Spencer Dalton (Pickens District Seat 4) and Kenneth Southerlin (Greenville/Spartanburg District Seat 1). Joel Davis, who represented the Oconee District in Seat 2 for 18 years, opted against a reelection effort this spring. Former U.S. Representative and Westminster native Gresham Barrett was nominated at February's district meeting to serve the area and voted in by acclamation.

To see the business portion of this year's annual meeting, go to [blueridge.coop/annualmeeting](https://blueridge.coop/annualmeeting). Thank you to all our members who participated in this year's annual meeting!



Tim Smith of Easley with his Coke and Moon Pie, a long-time Annual Meeting tradition.

PHOTOS BY JOSH GROTZER



Brad Bright, of Westminster (left), accepts the keys to this year's grand prize, a 2018 Dodge Ram 1500 Crew Cab, from BREC Vice President of Operations Bryan Roper.



Tim Bridgeman of the Oconee County Sheriff's Office shows off his Annual Meeting goodies.



While Crystal Bouknight is all smiles in the Westminster drive-thru line, her furry companion, Tango, seems less impressed.



## Capital Credits notice

Similar to previous years, profits from earlier decades that were used to build equity to reinvest in Blue Ridge's infrastructure will be returned to those who were members in

1995 and 1996 as capital credits. Since it began over 42 years ago, more than \$32.2 million has been returned to members. Check to see if your name is on our unclaimed capital credit list by going to [blueridge.coop/capitalcredits](https://blueridge.coop/capitalcredits).