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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.

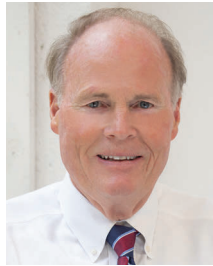
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This organization is an
equal-opportunity provider.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Looking back, moving forward

OUR 85TH ANNIVERSARY celebration formally concludes Aug. 14, a fitting time to reflect on the past year and

what lies ahead. I did the same with our employees in July, when we turned our attention to our country and its 250th birthday. Timing can be funny like that.

Last September's column opened by saying your co-op was "built on service, wired to deliver," and I believe we lived up to those words this year. We responded to Winter Storm Fern, which ranks among the five worst storms in our 85-year history, and our crews worked long hours to restore power in the chilling cold.

In the community, we continued to support our educators and students through Washington Youth Tour and our Bright Ideas scholarship program. I'm most proud of our employees for launching Watts of Love, our energy-efficiency and financial assistance program, which has provided more than \$20,000 in bill relief since January. I want to thank them again for the community-oriented mindset they bring to this work. I know for a fact that isn't the norm at every co-op across the country.

Operationally, we added more than 1,000 meters to our system and fielded over 110,000 phone calls in a 12-month span, a sign of our growth and the people behind it. That growth is matched by the work happening in field, too. Our new substation in the Utica community continues to take shape, and the rebuild of the Coneross substation will improve system redundancy across our network.

Upcountry update

That same commitment shows up in our broadband work. Upcountry Fiber, our internet service provider, celebrated its fifth anniversary this summer.

Nearly 300 miles of fiber have been built this year on a system that now totals well over 4,000 miles and 28,000 customers. Construction is set to wind down as the year comes to a close, so if you've been considering Upcountry Fiber but haven't made the switch, please contact those folks by visiting upcountryfiber.com.

Principally driven

Moving forward, your co-op will continue to exist to serve you, the membership. Our purpose is to provide safe, reliable power and enhance lives in the communities our employees also call home. The seven cooperative principles guide us toward that purpose: voluntary and open membership, democratic member control, members' economic participation, autonomy and independence, education, cooperation among cooperatives and concern for community.

Those final two, cooperation among cooperatives and concern for community, are the ones I've been proudest to see our employees thrive in acting out.

Although my time at the co-op will conclude at the end of the year, I'm confident these values will keep Blue Ridge on the right track. So much is changing in our industry, so quickly. Our state is growing as rapidly as any other in the country.

Through it all, the principles that built this co-op in 1941 are the same ones that will carry it forward.

Cooperatively Yours,

JIM LOVINGGOOD
President and CEO

Good friends love to see you smile



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