GA TENN TRI STATE Electric MEMBERSHIP CORP. NC

POWERLINES

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Anthony "Bones" Hamby Retires After 35 Years of Service

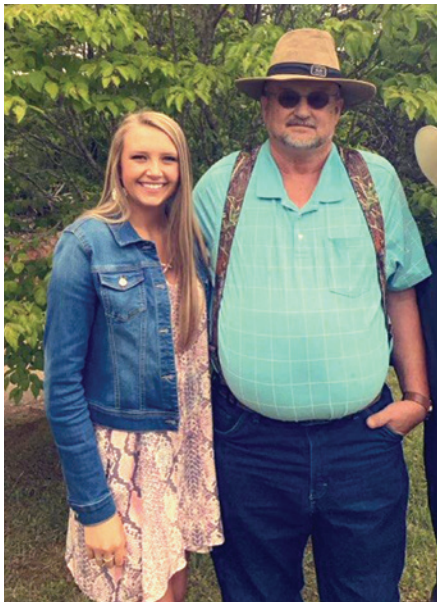
Tri-State EMC Foreman Anthony "Bones" Hamby retired from Tri-State EMC on March 1 after working here for 35 years.

Bones began his career on Jan. 5, 1987, when he started in the Right-of-Way Department working for Buck Hickey. He moved on to work as a groundman, where he worked with John Callihan, Ronnie Kimsey and Wesley "Doc" Payne. His next job was as a lineman, where he worked with John Callihan, Ronnie Kimsey, Doc Payne, Mike Earley, Buck Reece, Greg Brooks, Tom Lackey, Terry Arp and Chuck Thomas. Bones retired as foreman, and he worked on a crew with Dewayne O'Neal, Chris Johnson, Brian Arp, Joel Mann, Darren Queen and Chad Green.

Bones with his wife, Diana.

These men are very special to Bones. Pictured (l-r): Robert Sosebee, Bones, Ronnie Kimsey and Bob Welch.

Bones with his Tri-State EMC crew.



Bones with his granddaughter, Jaylan.

Bones has been married to his wife, Diana Baker Hamby, for 46 years. Bones and Diana have two boys, Jason and Justin, and four grandchildren, Jaylan, Jonah, Justus and Cashus.

Bones will be greatly missed at Tri-State EMC. He will forever be remembered at Tri-State for many things—first and foremost for always having a coffee cup in his hand! And most of all, he will be remembered as being a dedicated worker. Tri-State EMC will miss you, Bones!

Fannin County Middle School Welcomes Special Guest From TVA

Jessica Stevens, Program Manager with TVA Science Kids, recently visited Fannin County Middle School's sixth-grade exploratory classes, where she ran an environmental water quality monitoring program.

While at the middle school, Stevens and the students discussed watersheds and also tested the physical parameters of what makes water healthy from a local water source. The students went out on the nature trail and used water from Weaver Creek and Mineral Springs to conduct the experiment. The students tested the pH, dissolved oxygen, water temperature and turbidity of the water using beakers, test tubes and vials.

Students also observed chemical reactions, then used science and engineering practices to analyze and interpret data, as well as write explanations about whether their water source can support aquatic life. They also discussed core ideas about ecosystems, human impact on Earth's systems and natural resources.

Energy Efficiency *Tip of the Month*

Did you know the combined use of large appliances like dishwashers, clothes dryers and washing machines account for the largest percentage of electricity use in the average U.S. home? Take small steps to save energy when using these appliances.

Only run full loads in the dishwasher and thoroughly scrape food from dishes before loading. Dry towels and heavier cottons separate from lighter-weight clothing and clean the lint screen after every use. Wash clothing in cold water to save energy used to heat water.

Source: Energy Information Administration and Department of Energy

Tri-State EMC Operation Round Up Awards Scholarships to Deserving Students

Brock Whitaker
Copper Basin High School

Angel Garcia-Palomo
Fannin County High School

Sydney Payne
Hiwassee Dam High Schooll

Dawson Henry
Fannin Mountain Education Charter High School

All of the donations collected through Operation Round Up goes to nonprofits, charities and school systems locally in the Tri-State EMC service area.

The money comes from Tri-State EMC members who round their bill up to the next whole dollar. Once a month, the Tri-State EMC Foundation board considers grant requests and distributes the money. In 2013, the Operation Round Up board made the decision to grant one vocational student from Fannin County High School, Copper Basin High School, Hiwassee Dam High School and Fannin Mountain Education Charter High School each a $500 scholarship.

The Operation Round Up board elected to allow each school's scholarship committee to decide on the scholarship recipient. This scholarship is a fine example of where and how the money from Operation Round Up is used.

Thank you to all of the Tri-State EMC members who participate in Operation Round Up and help make this scholarship possible.

Fireworks and Power Lines Don't Mix!

If your family enjoys lighting sparklers or other legal fireworks on the Fourth of July, stay away from power lines.

- Light fireworks only in areas where there are absolutely no power lines.
- If you can see a power line, even in the distance, don't use fireworks.
- When any kind of firecracker touches a power line, it can cause a fire, a power outage or injuries.

Your best bet: Take the family to watch a fireworks display supervised by professionals in a public location away from your home.

Power Restoration: Lessons Learned From Line Crews

Whether the lights go out because of weather or squirrels, safety comes first for lineworkers.

By Paul Wesslund

You can learn a lot about power outages and restoration by watching, from a safe distance of course, a utility crew at work.

The first thing you'll notice is the deliberate, careful pace. They deploy signs to alert motorists. They mark the work area with orange cones. Always in hard hats and fire-protective clothing, anyone working on a power line pulls on heavy rubber gloves and spreads insulating blankets over the wires. Those same gloves have been tested by a machine that blows air into them to make sure there's not even a pinhole that could allow a deadly electric current to pass through.

If you ever wonder why restoring electricity after an outage can take awhile, there's a good answer: Line crews never compromise on safety.

ROB ROEDEL

And there's more you won't see. That morning, they likely huddled at the back of a truck to discuss what each of them would be doing that day, with an emphasis on safety. It's a best practice in the industry—so common it's often called a "tailgate meeting" or "toolbox talk."

Making safety a habit

There are a lot of reasons your electricity might go off, with weather by far the leading cause. But to a lineworker, all power outage repairs have one thing in common—safety.

Safety is common sense, as people want to get home alive, after all. But it's also drilled into the utility workers. In their pole-climbing contests, the fastest time will get disqualified with the slightest safety misstep. Co-op leadership makes it clear that skipping any safety measure or procedure is a firing offense. Line crews attend lectures aimed at driving home the importance of safety protocols.

So, if you ever wonder why restoring electricity after an outage can take awhile, there's a good answer: Line crews never compromise on safety.

The next thing you can learn from watching a line crew at work comes from seeing what task they're doing. There's a good chance they're replacing old equipment. Poles and transformers wear out, and failing equipment is one significant cause of power outages. The crew you watch might be restoring an equipment outage, or they might be switching out an old device to prevent a future outage.

You might see them replacing a downed utility pole, a painstaking process of removing the old, and hauling in and raising the new, using trucks specifically designed for the job.

Trees vs. power lines

A utility pole might be down because a motorist ran into it, which is another cause of outages, or it could be weather-related. Natural disasters like wind, ice and fires cause about 80% of power outages. One characteristic of those natural disasters is that the damage can be widespread. If one pole is down, lots of others could be as well. That means crews will be repeating the pole-replacement process one job at a time. That's why bringing the lights back on after a major storm with widespread outages can take days, or even weeks.

It's also likely the crew you're watching will be trimming trees. Trees are beautiful, but a common cause of outages as wind and nearby branches can lead to wires getting knocked to the ground. Electric cooperatives devote a lot of time and resources to urging and enforcing limits on planting anything too close to power lines. And crews regularly set up to trim limbs that get too close to the wires.

One fairly common cause of outages you probably won't learn about by watching a crew make repairs is wildlife. Squirrels and other critters routinely crawl around utility equipment, occasionally making a connection between high-voltage wires. Snakes that slither into an electric substation bring consequences, both for them and the utility company. Sometimes, crews need to investigate and correct the cause. Often the system will reset itself after only a brief power interruption.

So, what lessons can we learn from lineworkers? Outages can be caused by a variety of factors. Restoring power is an intricate process in a complex utility system. And safety—for crews and the community—will always be the top priority.

Paul Wesslund writes on consumer and cooperative affairs for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the national trade association representing more than 900 local electric cooperatives. From growing suburbs to remote farming communities, electric co-ops serve as engines of economic development for 42 million Americans across 56% of the nation's landscape.