



Berkeley Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

TO REPORT OUTAGES

Call: 1-888-253-4232

DISTRICT OFFICES

Hours: 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

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 Awendaw, SC 29426
 (843) 884-7525
 AWMemberRequests@bec.coop

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2 Springhall Road
 Goose Creek, SC 29445
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 GCMemberRequests@bec.coop

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 JIMemberRequests@bec.coop

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 MCMemberRequests@bec.coop

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Making plans for a rainy day

AS THE SUMMER MONTHS

approach, so does hurricane season. Although the Lowcountry doesn't usually

feel the impacts until later in the season, it's in everyone's best interest to be prepared. For electric utilities, this means taking extra precautions to prepare for potential power outages and infrastructure damage that can be caused by these powerful storms.

One of the key steps that we are taking is to inspect and maintain our power grid and equipment. This includes trimming trees and vegetation near power lines, checking the condition of poles and transformers and ensuring that equipment is in good working order. By proactively addressing any potential issues before a storm hits, we can reduce the likelihood of widespread power outages and minimize restoration times.

But perhaps the most important aspect of storm prep is continually reevaluating our response plan after each major event. It may surprise you to learn that Berkeley Electric did not have a Major Storm Plan until after Hurricane Hugo in 1989. Hugo was one of the most damaging storms in the co-op's history, destroying the majority of our system and leaving us without a single meter turning. In the wake of such devastation, even the best laid plans would have been tested, but Berkeley persevered. It was a painful lesson but one the co-op took to heart and used to create an extensive and thorough plan for before, during and after a major storm.

This type of planning is essential for being able to respond effectively when the unexpected happens as Berkeley found out after Winter Storm Pax in 2014. Ice storms are rare in the Lowcountry, so we were surprised when a late January ice storm was followed

almost immediately by another. The original forecast for Pax predicted less than a quarter-inch of ice. However, once the storm was through there was a full inch of accumulation coating power lines and tree limbs. This led to a total number of outages that exceeded Hurricane Hugo even though the storm affected only a portion of our system.

Most recently, our storm plan was put to the test during Hurricane Ian last September. The original forecast models showed Ian making landfall in Florida and moving into Georgia. In three days, the track rapidly shifted, and Ian made a direct hit on Charleston. Although not as damaging as Hugo, almost all available contract crews had been stationed in Florida and Georgia to aid with restoration in anticipation of the original forecast model. However, by relying on our Major Storm Plan, we were able to reach out to key contacts in neighboring states and bring in crews to help us get the lights back on.

So even though the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is predicting the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season to only be slightly above average, history has taught us that preparation is key. While it's impossible to predict the exact path and intensity of any storm, through careful planning and working diligently with our utility partners, we can minimize the potential impact to our members and respond quickly and effectively in the event of an outage or other emergency.

Sincerely,

MIKE FULLER
 President & CEO



Avoiding a cat-astrophe

IN WHAT HAS BECOME a familiar occurrence in recent months, Berkeley Electric came to the rescue of another animal friend. A stray kitten, which had been hanging around the house of one of our employees, chose the wrong place to hide when, unknown to her, it squeezed into the engine compartment of her car.

When the employee arrived at work, she was greeted by a strange noise from under the hood of her car and realized she had a stowaway. Luckily, the kitty stayed safely tucked out of harm's way during the harrowing ride and was later coaxed out of hiding by a group of concerned employees.

We're happy to say that the little hitchhiker is in good health and has been adopted by a fellow BEC employee! Luna (newly named by her family) is now being showered with love in her new home.

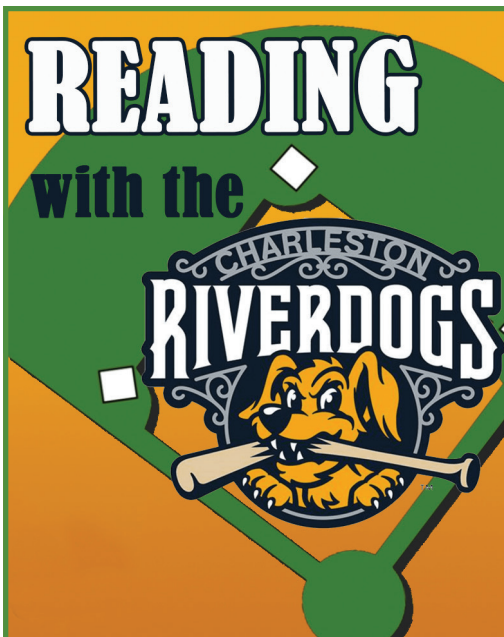


Beat the Heat

We're giving away two **FREE A/Cs** each week until July 28

Sign up at any district office or online at berkeleyelectric.coop

Courtesy of **WJMI 106.3** Gospel



Join Charlie and players from the Charleston RiverDogs for these awesome Spanish-language reading events!

◆ ◆ ◆

June 21 & July 27
11 a.m.
Johns Island Library
3531 Maybank Hwy.



WILLIS SANDERS
Trustee, District 6

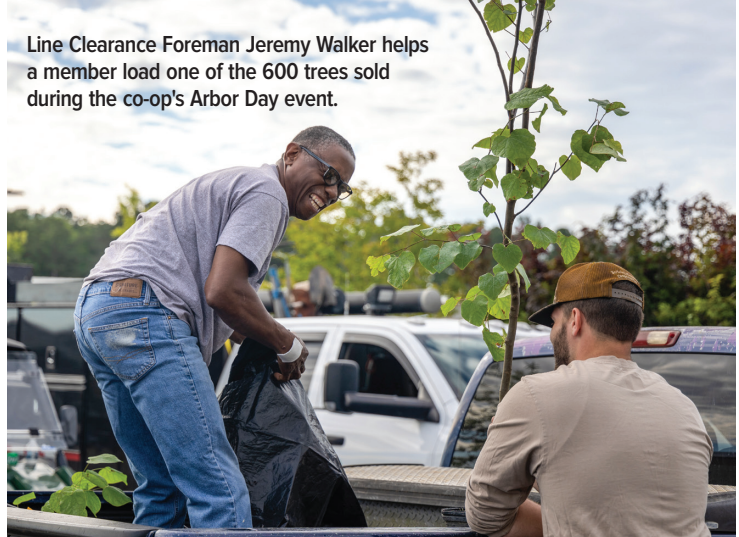
Planting for the future

IF YOU ARE a regular reader of the magazine, you will probably remember that last month we discussed the importance of trimming trees. So, it may seem a bit contradictory for me to now talk about the importance of planting them. However, both are equally as important to our cooperative's commitment to environmental stewardship.

Vegetation management is a key element to providing reliable energy, but it must be done correctly. Our trained arborists and foresters trim trees to industry standards that not only help us maintain our 99% reliability rating but also preserve the health of the trees. Removing danger trees and pruning branches along our right-of-ways can also give other plants the rain and light they need to be healthy.

Although overgrown vegetation accounts for around half of the co-op's outages, there are also many energy-saving benefits to planting the right tree in the right place. That is one of the reasons Berkeley Electric is proud to partner with the Arbor Day Foundation in an annual tree sale. This year we distributed 600 trees to our members and, besides making the Lowcountry more beautiful, there are several advantages to both the co-op and its members.

One of the most significant advantages of planting trees is their ability to conserve energy. Trees offer natural shading, which reduces the amount of direct sunlight that enters a building. By blocking the sun's rays, trees help to maintain cooler temperatures in buildings, especially during the



Line Clearance Foreman Jeremy Walker helps a member load one of the 600 trees sold during the co-op's Arbor Day event.

MICAH PONCE

summer months. This natural shading is particularly effective when trees are planted on the southern and western sides of buildings, as these areas receive the most direct sunlight. The shade provided by trees can reduce the need for air conditioning, which can save significant amounts of energy and reduce the costs of running air conditioning units.

In fact, in the last four years since we began our Arbor Day tree sale, we have helped plant more than 2,500 trees across the Lowcountry with a cumulative savings for our members of 2.5 million kilowatt-hours over the life of the trees. This is in addition to the thousands of pounds of air pollutants removed from the air and millions of gallons of storm water filtered before flowing back into the Lowcountry's lakes and rivers.

There is an old Greek proverb which states, "a society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit." As a cooperative, we take this view because we see ourselves as more than just an electric provider. Our employees live and work in the same communities as the members we serve, and it is our responsibility to ensure that the Lowcountry remains as special a place for the next generation as it is to this one.

Sincerely,

BERKELEY AT-A-GLANCE	FEBRUARY 2022	FEBRUARY 2023
Total kWh sold	310,878,322	326,394,540
No. meters served	116,729	122,101
Avg. residential kWh/meter	1,051	905
Avg. residential bill/meter	\$137.64	\$122.21
Miles of line	6112	6243
Avg. daily high temperature	67	73
Avg. daily low temperature	45	50



We romped in the swamp!

WE DID IT AGAIN! Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors and race participants, the 2nd Annual Bright Ideas 5K raised a record-breaking amount to support local teachers. The event, which was held on April 22, took place at historic Cypress Gardens, a 170-acre black water swamp preserve located in Moncks Corner.

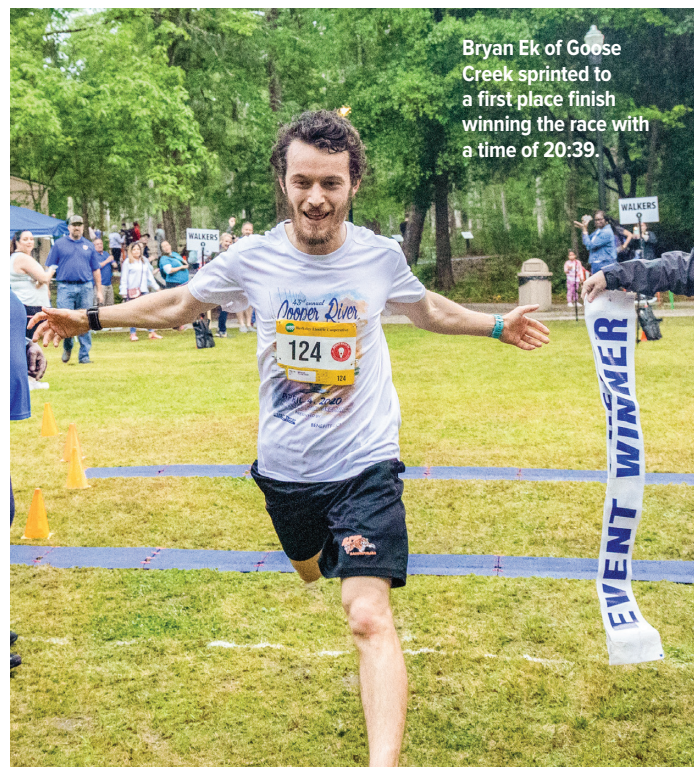
Despite a rainy start, more than 325 runners and walkers crossed the finish line and helped Berkeley Electric raise over \$35,000. These funds will be distributed this summer as grants to support innovative classroom projects for 46 local teachers.

"My wife is a teacher and a lot of them have great ideas that they want to implement but they just don't have the resources. By her receiving this grant, hopefully this will help those kids learn and grow," says Bryan Ek of Goose Creek, who came in first overall in the race.

Teachers Ellen Lundstrom and Brie Scott of Ft. Dorchester High School agree. "We've had our idea for such a long time but weren't able to pursue it. We're so excited to finally get funding so that we can start the process," says Lundstrom. "It was such a good feeling to get some recognition as a teacher."

"The youth and schools in our area are vital to our communities," says CEO Mike Fuller. "We all came together to show our appreciation and support for what these teachers are doing. It feels good to know we played a role in helping both our teachers and students."

The race, presented by PARIC Corporation and Cooperative Building Solutions, featured approximately one mile of road running, one mile of trail running and one mile of paved and gravel paths. Despite the challenging terrain, Ek finished with a time of 20:39 while 14-year-old Lillian Elliott of Moncks Corner was the first-place female finisher with a time of 25:01. Plans are already underway for next year's race, which will be held



Bryan Ek of Goose Creek sprinted to a first place finish winning the race with a time of 20:39.

on May 4 (also known as Star Wars Day) so save the date and be sure to bring your lightsabers! Full race results and a photo gallery of this year's 5K can be found on the co-op's website at berkeleyelectric.coop.

For more information about the Bright Ideas program visit the co-op's website on the "Teachers & Students" page under the "My Community" menu.



The Deven Forest Elementary Dragon Racers were on fire during their first Bright Ideas 5K.



The kids are alright especially 14-year-old Lillian Elliott who finished first in the Women's Division.



These amazing teachers were recognized after the race and will be receiving over \$35,000 in Bright Ideas grants for their classrooms.

PHOTOS BY BERKELEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Brophy cares for, connects with patients

Home health nurse, Who Powers You nominee serves rural Charleston County

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

ALONG WITH HIS BAG of medical supplies, home health nurse Chuck Brophy might be seen walking into a client's home with a bag of groceries, a pair of hedge clippers or an air-conditioning window unit.

For the past four years, the Berkeley Electric member has been doing whatever he can—from bringing a few things from the store to minor landscaping—in order to help the people he visits throughout Berkeley County and surrounding areas. According to Brophy, home visits provide a deeper and sometimes more informative connection than clinics and physicians' offices.

"I'm seeing them for about nine weeks, sometimes multiple times a week," explains Brophy, who visits an average of 30 patients per week. "So, you get to know families and their stories. And then you can start to pick up on the little things that are sometimes missed in a doctor's office. I think it provides a crucial service to citizens, especially in upper Berkeley County, where access to a medical doctor is just not there for many people."

Brophy's commitment and care for his clients earned him a nomination for Berkeley Electric's Who Powers You Award in 2022, a co-op sponsored contest to honor those people that are making a difference in their community.

"He goes out of his way to ensure his patients have everything they need, even when it's not related to his role as a nurse," says Alicia Lawless, Brophy's wife and nominator. "Chuck focuses on making sure the elderly patients in our community feel loved, valued, and not so alone."

That was an especially critical service during the pandemic, according to Brophy.

"I guess loneliness isn't a medical diagnosis, but it really does have an effect," he says. "Older people that are socially isolated are at a much greater risk for dementia, heart disease and strokes. During the pandemic, a lot of people out in the country didn't have families or friends that could check on them regularly. I think it really does make a difference for some people just to see another human."

It also made a difference to Brophy. As a native of Philadelphia, experiencing Southern hospitality with longtime residents of the state has made this Summerville resident feel more at home.

"It comes down to sharing stories," says Brophy. "I hear fascinating stories about people and how they grew up. I moved here about six years ago, so I've learned so much about South Carolina. I think it's mutually beneficial."



Chuck Brophy

Who Powers You?

ARE YOU INSPIRED

by someone who is making a difference in our community?

Let's celebrate them! Tell us their story and they could win a prize from Berkeley Electric Cooperative.

We are now accepting nominations for the 2023 Who Power You contest.

One hero from our community will win \$1,000 and have a chance at the statewide grand prize of \$2,500. Winners will be selected by a panel of judges based on the impact they have on our community.

Visit ecsc.org/WhoPowersYou for full contest rules and to nominate the person that inspires you.

All entries must be submitted by July 31.

