

The NEWS LINE

RUTHERFORD ELECTRIC MEMBERSHIP CORPORATION

www.remccom

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Owned by Those We Serve

January 2024

Rutherford EMC Awards Bright Ideas Grants to Help Empower a Brighter Future

Rutherford EMC recently awarded 17 educators with over \$13,200 in Bright Ideas education grants to fund innovative classroom learning projects. More than 3,200 students at schools in Burke, Catawba, Cleveland, Gaston, Lincoln, McDowell, Polk and Rutherford counties will participate in Bright Ideas projects funded by Rutherford EMC this year.

"These Bright Ideas grants always make a tremendous difference for the teachers and classrooms who receive them," said Dirk Burseson, General Manager of Rutherford EMC. "Educators always seem to have so many creative ideas they are not able to implement due to funds, so we're honored to support them, their students and our communities through this program that makes learning more fun and engaging. Rutherford EMC is committed to providing a Brighter Future to the communities we serve, and we truly believe there is no better way than through the education of our youth."

During the month of November, North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives awarded Bright Ideas education grants to teachers statewide. Since the Bright Ideas grant program began in 1994, Rutherford EMC has contributed more than \$468,800 to local teachers by awarding 606 grants that have involved more than 130,000 students. North Carolina's 26 electric cooperatives collectively have awarded more than \$15 million to teachers across the state. The Bright Ideas program has reached well over 3.5 million North Carolina students and sponsored more than 14,200 projects. Grants have been awarded in all subject areas including math, reading, science, technology, history, music, and the arts.

Bright Ideas grant applications are collected each year from mid-April through mid-September, and winning proposals are selected in a competitive evaluation process by a panel of judges. The application process will reopen in April 2024.

To find out more information about the Bright Ideas grant program, visit remccom or the Bright Ideas website at nrbrightideas.com. Become a fan of "Bright Ideas Education" on Facebook to receive regularly updated news about the program.

This year's awards locally, including the names of individual and/or team project winners, their respective schools, and the names of the winning projects are as follows:

Burke County

- Meghan Welty of Freedom High, Morganton: "Vocational Skills in a Box"
- Laura Horton of Salem Elementary, Morganton: "Boogie Boards – Not Just For the Ocean"

Catawba County

- Ashley Brown of Tuttle Elementary, Maiden: "Uke Can Play!"
- Melody Madej of Maiden Elementary, Maiden: "Science, Technology & Math"
- Molly Ryan of Viewmont Elementary, Hickory: "Managing our Emotions"

Cleveland County

- Lynn Edwards Kinmon of Washington Elementary, Shelby: "Help Me Save Our Trees"

Gaston County

- Allison Harbin of John Chavis Middle, Cherryville: "Maker Madness"

Lincoln County

- Carrie Munday of Catawba Springs Elementary, Denver: "STEM: Unlocking the Inner Scientist in Students"
- Crystal Ryczek of Rock Springs Elementary, Denver: "Unlock Learning with Breakout EDU Boxes"

McDowell County

- Susan Higdon of West McDowell Middle, Marion: "To Vocabulary and Beyond!"
- Walter Shane Ramey of West McDowell Middle, Marion: "NC Military History Footlocker"
- Lori Poteat of Foothills Community School, Marion: "Hands on Math"
- Chad Brewer of McDowell High, Marion: "McDowell High Masonry"
- Ashley Randolph of Alternative Education Center, Marion: "Digital Thermometers for a Digital World"

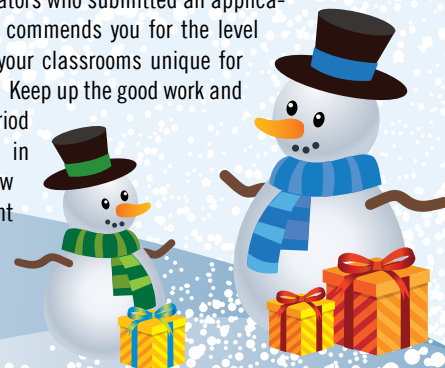
Polk County

- Stephanie Fletcher of Saluda Elementary, Saluda: "Ciao from Saluda!"

Rutherford County

- Annie McEntire of R-S Central High, Rutherfordton: "Pocket Lab Thermos for Interactive Chemistry"
- Dale Rush of Lake Lure Classical, Rutherfordton: "Electrify my Learning"

Rutherford EMC congratulates each of these Bright Ideas grant winners and extends a thanks to all educators who submitted an application this school year. The co-op commends you for the level of interest you have in making your classrooms unique for increased learning opportunities. Keep up the good work and remember the application period for Bright Ideas will reopen in April 2024, so start planning now and let us help put your Bright Idea into action!



SWAP SHOP

Rutherford Electric Membership Corporation provides Swap Shop ads as a free service to its members. Guidelines are as follows: Ads are published first-come, first-served. When the space allotted for ads each month is full, remaining ads will be held over for the next issue. Ads will not be run more than once unless re-submitted. Commercial ads will not be accepted. We reserve the right to edit, condense or deny publication of any advertisement. Rutherford Electric Membership Corp. assumes no responsibility for the content of any advertisement and does not endorse or warrant any of the goods so advertised. Please include your account number with your ad.

Mail your ads to:

Newsletter Editor, Rutherford EMC, PO Box 1569,
Forest City, NC, 28043-1569 or e-mail at cbailey@remc.com.
No phone calls, please.

FOR SALE

Cemetery plot at Forest Lawn in Lincolnton, NC, close to the office, under the big oak tree, handicap accessible, plot is on left if looking towards the office, \$1,500. 704-735-5643.

NKC registered Miniature Doberman Pinschers and Shelties. 828-334-4257.

Oak & Hickory firewood - \$85 truck load, bring your truck; Grandad's local crop honey, \$16 quart; Pecans in shell, \$5/lb. 704-748-3258.

Catnapper chair - 6 months old, used very little, brown in color, smoke free, very large chair & we just need a small recliner, paid \$899, asking \$600. 980-241-4362.

46" Sanyo color TV w/stand, very good cond. 980-429-5319.

Fisher metal detector for land or water, bought in 2005, used very little, \$150. Morganton, NC. 828-391-1778.

Solid wood F/G Cannonball 5 pc. bedroom suit,

\$400; 14 lb. bag of pillow stuffing, \$10; 100-year-old banjo; Skilsaw blades, \$2 ea.; "Lovelace" China in an 8 pc. setting, \$25; 4 new scrapbooks, paper & cases. 828-320-4574.

CKC Yorkie-Poos, tails docked, de-dew clawed; also have Shih-Poos. Morganton area. 828-433-1374.

Black walnuts shelled - \$4 per measuring cup. Lincolnton, NC. 704-735-5030.

Wood splitter - 25 ton, 6.5 HP engine, \$1,100 or trade; 275 gallon water totes, \$75; metal drums, \$10; plastic drums, \$10; feed barrels, \$20; cages for fire wood, \$25. Hickory, NC. 828-327-4782.

2005 Cadillac DeVille w/80,900 miles, white w/ blue vinyl top, PS, PB, PW, power seats, heated seats & steering wheel, good tires, \$2,000 obo, leave a message if no answer, I will return your call. 704-445-2027.

Pomeranian puppy - male, born 6/5/23, orange/sable coloring, vaccinated and dewormed, \$600. Text 704-665-7672.

1,000 watt solar inverter w/controller. Brand new, \$400; Marathon seat covers and Weather Guard floor mats for a 2004 Toyota Tundra, \$40. Casar, NC. 828-448-4472.

Yorkie's - AKC registered and all vet care, males \$800, females \$1,500, would trade for a female of same, born on Nov. 28th. Kings Mtn, NC. 704-923-5834.

Titan 21 speed 26" bicycle, \$100. 828-334-7022.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale or Rent: Available February 17-24, 2024: The Christie Lodge -All Suite Property/Beaver

Creek, located in Avon, CO, 1 BR timeshare condo for rent, \$995 per week or \$150 daily, rates are negotiable, sleeps 4, on site & close by amenities, just minutes from Vale, CO, easy transportation to & from the Denver airport. Condo is also for sale as a deeded property w/annual use during Red Winter weeks (mid-December to mid-April). A commission will be paid for assistance with rental or sale. 704-732-8678.

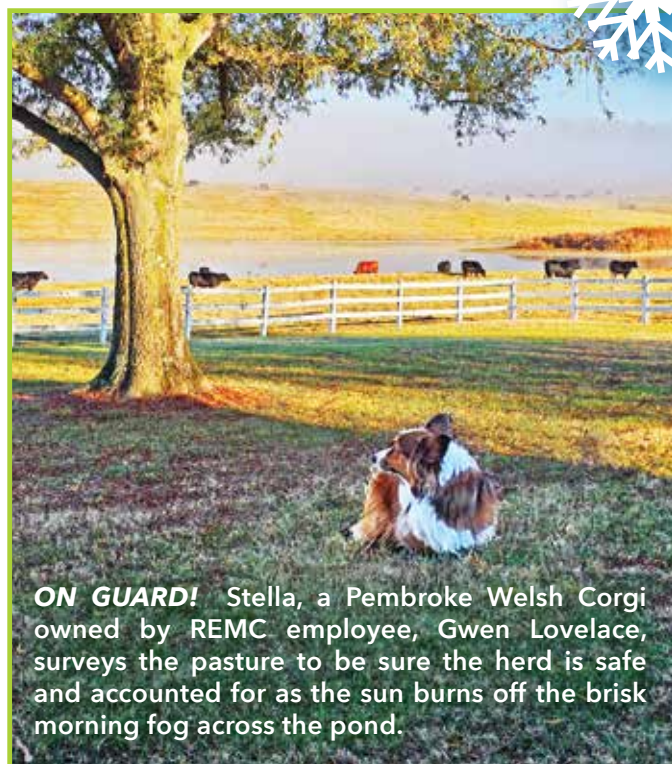
WANTED

Early model Volkswagen Beetle (1950-1979) in average or above average condition. 704-473-6578.

Two strong individuals needed to move a Temper-Pedic mattress from a home in Bessemer City to a home in Gastonia, about a 9-mile trip. Call or text to let me know what you would charge. 704-689-8258.

Toyotomi laser kerosene heater, Model 731 or 732, complete with exhaust pipe, must be in good condition, will pay cash. 828-433-8337.

Rear Hydro-Transaxle to fit a Craftsman LT-1000 riding mower, in good condition. Must be Hydro! 828-433-8337.



ON GUARD! Stella, a Pembroke Welsh Corgi owned by REMC employee, Gwen Lovelace, surveys the pasture to be sure the herd is safe and accounted for as the sun burns off the brisk morning fog across the pond.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY TIP OF THE MONTH

During winter months, ensure your home is well sealed to reduce the need for excessive heating. Seal air leaks around your home and add insulation where needed to save up to 10% on annual energy bills.

Install weather stripping on exterior doors and apply caulk around windows. Check attic insulation levels and hire a qualified contractor if additional insulation is required.

Source: energystar.gov

Decreased Annual NC Renewable Energy Fee Established For 2024

In 2007, North Carolina passed Senate Bill 3 with overwhelming bipartisan support authorizing the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard (REPS) to promote the development of clean energy resources in our state. A critical step to expanding North Carolina's energy mix for a secure, affordable long-term energy future, and the REPS law requires electric utilities to generate a portion of their electricity from renewable energy and energy efficient resources. The NC Renewable Energy Fee line item on your monthly bill decreased on Dec. 1, 2023. North Carolina is one of 29 states with similar portfolio standards.

Members will see the following changes: the residential fee will drop from \$1.26 to \$0.84 monthly; the commercial fee will drop from \$6.98 to \$4.67 monthly and the industrial fee will drop from \$46.56 to \$31.10 monthly. Rutherford EMC has coordinated with its wholesale power supplier to meet the NC REPS fee in the most efficient manner possible. The expenses to comply with the NC REPS laws fluctuate annually based on the cost of renewable and energy efficiency projects determined by the wholesale power provider.

Middle Schoolers, Apply for a Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarship to Attend Basketball Camp this Summer!

Rutherford EMC begins accepting applications Jan. 1, for full scholarships to attend basketball camps at two North Carolina universities this summer. Young men can apply for a scholarship to attend the Carolina Basketball School which will be held June 22-26 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Young women can apply for a spot at the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp, which will be held in June at N.C. State University in Raleigh.

The scholarships cover all expenses at the overnight camps, which provide

a glimpse into life on a college campus. Campers stay overnight in dorms, learn fundamental skills that will help them excel on and off the court and receive individual and group instruction from Division 1 coaches to enhance their basketball and team-building abilities.

To apply, students must be a sixth or seventh grader during the 2024-2025 school year. The application period opens January 1, and it must be submitted by March 31, 2024. To learn more and apply, visit remc.com or ncelectriccooperatives.com/sports-camps.



*If you know any of
last year's winners,
shown below,
ask them about this
exciting opportunity.*

*Last Year's Winners (L to R):
Preslie Bradley and Katie Wyant
with Coach Wes Moore,
and Ethan Dotson with
Coach Hubert Davis*



2023 Awards Total 635 Years of Service



Rutherford EMC recently recognized 2 directors and 35 employees for their service, which totals 635 years. Each one received a certificate based upon their five-year interval.

LINCOLN-GASTON DISTRICT

Glen Hudson, 35
Jeffrey Warlick, Barry Richards, 30
Linda Bean, Jerry Austin, 25
Myra Alexander, Dennis Lutjens, Jr.,
J. Phillip Peeler, 20
Scott Qualls, 15
Alex Martin, J. Seath Hartman,
Nicholas Cook, 5

BURKE-MCDOWELL DISTRICT

Jeffrey C. Brittain, 40
Director J. Dean Carpenter, Hubert Howard, Jr., 35
Claude Baker, C. Lee Brittain, Jr., 30
Rodney Roland, 10
Director Marcus Mullen, Darius Suddreth, 5

RUTHERFORD-POLK DISTRICT

Robert H. Cole, Jr., 45

Colon L. Saunders, 35

M. Scott Campbell, 25

Thomas M. Haire, 20

Misty Haynes, Meghan Melton, 15

Corey T. Church, M. Joseph Sumpter, Jr., 10

Daysi Graybill, Adam Hensley,
R. Tyler Hensley, Jedidiah Hester,
Samantha Hewitt, Austin Hollifield,
Brittany Pinkerton, Landon Smith,
Chanyia Watkins, 5

Congratulations to all of our service award recipients!

Get to Know Your Heat Pump Now

With the temperatures dropping, it is more important than ever to keep a watchful eye on your home energy usage. The device to watch the closest is the one that uses the largest amount of power, your heating and air system, which is typically a heat pump.

I have gained a love-hate relationship with air source heat pumps through doing energy audits and field checks at the co-op. An air source heat pump, when functioning properly, is "the next best thing since sliced bread." However, when an air-source heat pump has malfunctioned, members can get blind-sided by a large power bill that is often easily avoidable.

If I could offer one piece of advice, it would be to check to make sure that your heat pump is functioning during the months the unit is used for heating your home. A properly functioning heat pump is one in which the outside unit is running. The same device that cooled your home all summer must be running to efficiently heat your home in the winter. **The fan on top of the unit should be turning**, which indicates that the compressor beneath it is working. If you notice that heat is coming from your registers, but the heat pumps outside unit never turns on, you have a problem and I can almost guarantee you an electric bill that you will look at with disbelief.

To fully understand why malfunctioning heat pumps cause skyrocketing electric bills, we must fully understand how an air source heat pump is designed to work. A heat pump has two methods of providing heat. It has an outside unit that pumps whatever free heat is available in the outside air into the house. However, sometimes there is not enough outside heat in the air to heat a house. When this occurs, the heat pump automatically reverts to a backup heat system, called auxiliary or emergency heat.

The backup heat is a series of metal strips that heat up much like a toaster oven. An air handler then blows air through the heat strips. The heated air comes out of the register at about 120 degrees. This backup system heats a house wonderfully, but the problem is **this is very expensive heat!** So if your heat pump ceases operating outside, your system will continue to function, but with very expensive heat. Another way to tell if your heat pump is inoperable is by looking at the thermostat. Depending on your thermostat, you may see the words *auxiliary heat*, *EM heat*, or an indicator light. However, some thermostats show none of these signs at all. The better approach, in my opinion, is simply to visibly inspect your outside heat pump unit weekly to make sure it is indeed, running.

The next step in making sure your heat pump doesn't consume unnecessary electricity is to keep check on the temperature of the air coming from the vents. This can be done with an inexpensive thermometer that can be purchased at most auto parts stores.

A thermometer can be placed in a vent on the floor or taped to a vent in the ceiling. A properly functioning heat pump will produce air from about 95 degrees to possibly over 100 degrees. If the air coming from the unit

is in the 80s, or even lower, your unit needs to be serviced or you have significantly leaky ductwork. As discussed earlier, if the heat coming from the vents is around 120 degrees that is a clear indication that your unit is using the backup heat source, or the *very expensive heat*, because the strips are running. This may be normal or abnormal, depending on the outside temperature.

If the air temperature is in the mid 30s or lower, there is not enough heat in the outside air for your heat pump to bring into the house. As such, it will use backup heat to make up the difference. However, if the outside temperature is in the upper 30s or higher, your heat pump is not operating correctly and should be checked by a qualified technician.

Rutherford EMC is committed to helping our members use electricity as efficiently as possible. We advocate low-cost methods to save energy for the simple reason that high-cost methods are rarely cost effective over a reasonable amount of time. One of the most valuable things that we give members is the knowledge of where their energy dollars are going. Armed with this information, members can then decide which trade-offs they are willing to make in order to keep their electric bills manageable.

Original Article by Chris Powell of Albemarle EMC



Knowing how to spot a faulty heat pump could save you considerable money on heating this winter.

IF YOUR POWER GOES OFF

1. Check your fuses or circuit breakers. If you live in a mobile home, be sure to check your switch box outside (if you have one).
2. Look around and see if you can spot the trouble (for example: fallen trees, broken poles, etc.). Try to find out if any of your neighbors are out of power also.
3. Then call any REMC office listed at right. Phones are answered 24 hours a day.

REMC OFFICES & PHONE NUMBERS

FOREST CITY
(828) 245-1621 or
1-800-521-0920
(Toll Free)

MARION
(828) 652-2136

GASTONIA
(704) 629-6226

CHERRYVILLE
(704) 435-5401 or
1-800-228-5331
(Toll Free)

LINCOLNTON
(704) 735-5381

MORGANTON
(828) 584-1410 or
1-800-228-9756
(Toll Free)