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Horry Electric Cooperative, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Horry Electric Cooperative Inc. is a not-for-profit, member-owned organization providing information and energy-related services on a fair and equitable basis.



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative



Energy affordability

THE COST OF electricity is on a lot of people's minds right now, so I want to discuss where things stand and what your electric co-op is doing

about it.

First, you should know every decision that is made and everything we do at Horry Electric comes back to three things—safety, affordability and reliability. In other words, we want to be safe as we work to keep your lights on at the lowest possible cost.

Now, on safety and reliability, we're like an offensive line in football. If we're doing a great job, you probably don't notice us, which is perfectly okay. Affordability, on the other hand, is something that comes to your attention at least once a month when you receive your power bill.

Even though the bill comes once a month, I want you to know that affordability is something we think about and work on every single day of the year.

We've all seen that the cost of living has risen dramatically over the past few years. We recognize that when your power bill goes up, it's a big deal. It's no less frustrating than the rising cost of putting food on the table, keeping a roof over your family's head or fueling your vehicle.

We get it. We take it seriously. We're right here with you.

As a not-for-profit electric cooperative, we don't benefit when you pay more for power. We're owned and governed by you, our members. We answer to you, not to shareholders or investors. You are our priority.

That's why we are constantly looking

for ways to manage the costs we can control. It's why we work so hard with other co-ops to share costs, negotiate the best possible deals for wholesale electricity and pool our buying power to get critical materials and equipment at the lowest possible prices.

It's why we're always looking closely at our operations to maximize efficiencies and reduce expenses. It's why we offer devices and tips that help you control your home's energy use. That work never stops.

At the same time, I want to be clear with you. Our cost of doing business is only going in one direction, and that's up. While we work hard to soften the impact of these rising costs, we're not immune to the broader cost pressures that have led virtually every power company in the state to raise their electric rates over the past couple of years.

I wish I could promise you we'll never have to raise rates. However, that's not realistic.

What I can promise is this: if and when we have to make difficult decisions in the future, we will approach them in the same way your co-op always has—thoughtfully, carefully and with you in mind. We will be transparent about the challenges we're facing and the steps we're taking to solve them.

We are your co-op and we will never forget that.

J. REED COOPER, P.E.
 Executive Vice President and CEO

Socastee grad receives \$1,500 scholarship

MILEY GRAVES aspires to pursue a career in accounting with hopes of one day becoming a chief financial officer or a leader within a company. During her four years at Socastee High School, she's been involved in both academics and extracurricular activities to hopefully achieve her goal one day.

Graves will attend Coastal Carolina University in the fall to major in accounting. She will enter CCU as a sophomore and plans to earn her degree in three years. Her fourth year will be dedicated to earning her Master of Business Administration.

With her goals in mind, Graves has applied for numerous scholarships. She recently received The Daniel B. Shelley, III Future Accountants Scholarship through Horry Electric Cooperative.

This scholarship initiative was launched in 2025 in honor of Daniel "Danny" B. Shelley, who served as Horry Electric's executive vice president and CEO from 2019 to 2025. The one-time

scholarship is for a student who has been accepted into a two- or four-year accounting, finance or business program at a South Carolina college.

"I always knew I wanted to go into business," Graves says. "I've also loved math and it's my favorite subject. When I found out you can combine business and math with accounting, I picked this as a career."

Graves takes pride in staying organized and being involved. She works part-time after school, while serving as the Socastee High student body president and captain of the cheerleading team. She also played soccer, served as president of DECA (business and marketing club) and was named Miss Socastee 2025. She also started the Beta Club at her school.

Graves hopes to continue some of these activities at CCU. She plans to get involved in student government and business fraternities, while continuing cheering.

"I'm just very lucky to be able to get scholarships because I'm excited to be able to go to college and not have to worry about finances so much," Graves



JENNIFER CUMMINGS

Miley Graves will attend Coastal Carolina University this fall with several scholarships, including The Daniel B. Shelley, III Future Accountants Scholarship.

says. "I want to be able to get involved and focus on my academics."

For anyone looking to apply for college scholarships, Graves says to be prepared for interviews and always be yourself.

"Apply for as much as you can. Not everything's going to be a perfect fit for you, but finding more (scholarships) will give you better opportunities. Stay organized and do as much as you can to meet deadlines."

D.C bound

Local students take part in Washington Youth Tour

THIS MONTH, four exceptional Horry County students are gearing up for the experience of a lifetime. These future leaders are embarking on a fully funded educational tour of Washington, D.C., courtesy of Horry Electric Cooperative. They'll get a firsthand look at government, history and the power of cooperation.

Washington Youth Tour, started under President Lyndon B. Johnson, is set for June 14–19. The four students representing Horry Electric are Riley Batson (Conway High School), Annabeth Hardwick (Conway Christian School), Mason Lee (Conway Christian School) and John Pratt (Scholar's Academy High School).

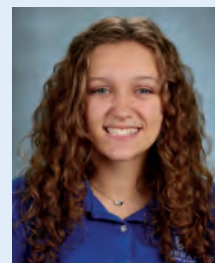
They'll spend a week in the nation's

capital alongside peers from across the country, visiting iconic landmarks such as the Pentagon, Washington Monument and the Smithsonian museums. The experience also includes a trip to Capitol Hill, where students will meet with members of Congress to see the democratic process in action.

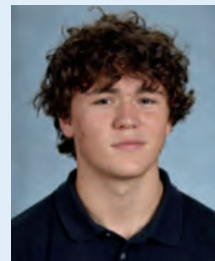
Inspired by Washington Youth Tour, South Carolina's electric cooperatives launched a state-level initiative in 2017 called Cooperative Youth Summit. This program, held in July, gives high school sophomores the opportunity to visit Columbia for an exclusive tour of the South Carolina State House, meet with state legislators and learn more about the cooperative business model.



Riley Batson, Conway High School



Annabeth Hardwick, Conway Christian School



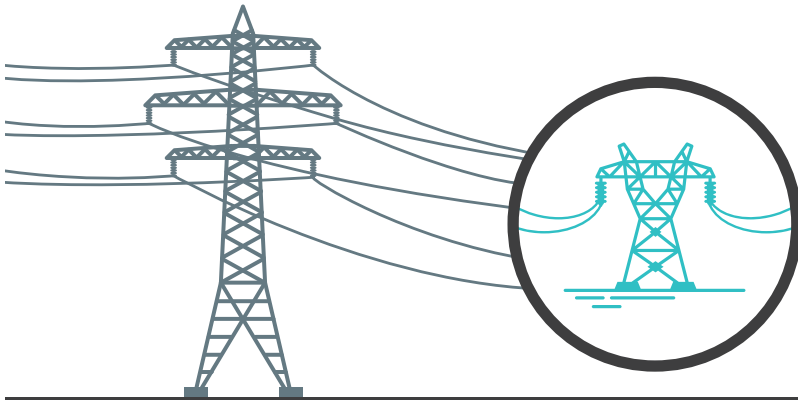
Mason Lee, Conway Christian School



John Pratt, Scholar's Academy High School

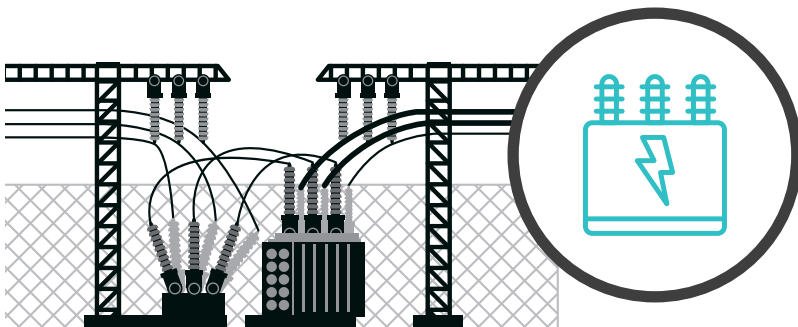
The Steps to Restoring Power

When a major outage occurs, our crews restore service to the greatest number of people in the shortest time possible – until everyone has power.



1. High-Voltage Transmission Lines

These lines carry large amounts of electricity. They rarely fail but must be repaired first.



2. Distribution Substations

Crews inspect substations, which can serve hundreds or thousands of people.



3. Main Distribution Lines

Main lines serve essential facilities like hospitals and larger communities.



4. Individual Homes and Businesses

After main line repairs are complete, we repair lines that serve individual homes and businesses.

Strong start

HEC's first Bright Ideas 5K boosts funds available for teacher grants

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

HORRY ELECTRIC'S first race was George Hagen's 1,030th (or something close to that number).

Hagen, an 89-year-old Murrells Inlet resident, started running in 1980 when he quit smoking and began developing "a gut."

"When (running) gets old, or the doctor tells me to, I'll quit," says Hagen. "But I enjoy it, and so I'll keep running."

The slender senior was one of more than 300 local runners and walkers participating in Horry Electric's inaugural Bright Ideas 5K in April. He finished fourth in his age group.

The event netted the co-op the most amount of money ever available for its educational grants program, with \$19,973 raised through sponsorships and donations. Horry Electric's Bright Ideas provides grants of up to \$1,000 to Horry County teachers for innovative classroom projects that fall outside normal school funding.

"Combined with other funds, this is going to allow us to award approximately \$22,000 to local classrooms," says Jennifer Cummings, race organizer and coordinator of Horry Electric's public relations and marketing. "That's more grant money than we ever have had before."

Bright Ideas has provided education grants to local teachers since 2007. Previous Bright Ideas grants have funded projects such as a student-built library at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic School, the "Color the Walls with History Project" at Conway Middle School and the creation of an outdoor learning space at Palmetto Bays Elementary.



The Bright Ideas 5K course led runners over Conway's Riverwalk.

PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER

"Anything that does something to help education is worthwhile," says Hagen, who, along with his wife, already supports local classrooms. They volunteer at their granddaughter's school and donate Hagen's many race participation medals to the school to use as tokens of academic achievement.

For Whitney Rougier, a special education teacher at River Oaks Elementary School in Myrtle Beach, the connection between the race and the classroom gave her race experience extra meaning.



Willie Wiredhand didn't run the race, but he did win over the kids waiting at the finish line.



Surfside Beach's Burn Boot Camp added the Bright Ideas 5K to their growing list of local races.



One of the things that makes running enjoyable for George Hagen (left) is the friendships he makes with fellow runners.



As the sun rose above downtown Conway, Horry Electric lineworkers raised the American flag for participants to run under.

“I think it’s a great cause, and hopefully it will help out in the future for Horry County schools,” says Rougier. “It’s an impressive turnout for a first-time event.”

The Bright Ideas 5K course followed the standard race route through Conway’s scenic downtown, taking the runners along riverfront boardwalks and the marina. It drew participants as young as 8.

The race also drew organized running groups from across the area. It was the eighth race in six months for runners from Burn Boot Camp in Surfside Beach, who have committed to running at least one 5K per month.

“Everything was seamless, from parking to check-in to the medals,” says Burn Boot Camp member Alexandria Cowell, who placed second in her division. “Everyone has been very nice.”

Tripp Inabnit, a 16-year-old from Conway, was the overall winner with a time of 19 minutes, 15 seconds. William Noriega of Myrtle Beach finished second, and Nicholas Davis, 13, of Little River placed third.

“We’re grateful for all of the runners that came out to be a part of our Bright Ideas 5K and to help us support our schools,” says Cummings. “This is a great start to what we hope is a new tradition of commitment to our communities.”

MORE TO COME—Horry Electric will announce the 2026 Bright Ideas recipients later this summer.



Lauren Kaye of Conway, who won the female 20-29 division, is happy to be in the home stretch.



Top finishers in the inaugural Bright Ideas 5k were (left to right) William Noriega (second place), Tripp Inabnit (first place) and Nicholas Davis (third place).

Top finishers

Overall

1st—Tripp Inabnit, Conway

2nd—William Noriega, Myrtle Beach

3rd—Nicholas Davis, Little River

Overall Female—Allie Binkley, Myrtle Beach

Age 1-9

Male—K. Bailey, Myrtle Beach

Female—C. Burgess, Myrtle Beach

Age 10–19

Male—Matthew Grant, Myrtle Beach

Female—A. Angelini, Myrtle Beach

Age 20–29

Male—Cameron Colella, Cumberland, R.I.

Female—Lauren Kaye, Conway

Age 30–39

Male—Tucker Barnes, Loris

Female—Megan Herget, Murrells Inlet

Age 40–49

Male—Domingo Sanchez Guerra, Conway

Female—Brandi Benson, Conway

Age 50–59

Male—Johnny Marlowe, Myrtle Beach

Female—Keri Jonas, Murrells Inlet

Age 60–69

Male—Mark Mangelinkx, Bristol, Conn.

Female—Linda Bastille, Conway

Age 70+

Ed Einhaus, Myrtle Beach

Lightning Safety Word Search

Did you know June 21-27 is National Lightning Safety Awareness Week?

Lightning can happen fast and be very dangerous but staying safe is easy when you know what to do! Read the following safety tips, then find and circle the **bolded** words in the puzzle below.



- When thunder roars, go **indoors!** If you can hear thunder, **lightning** is close enough to be dangerous.
- Stay away from all **water** sources. Don't swim, use hoses or play near standing water when a **storm** is present.
- Avoid tall things and open spaces. Stay away from **tall trees**, poles and open fields where lightning tends to **strike**.
- Wait 30 minutes after the last sound of **thunder**. Even if the rain stops, **wait** at least 30 minutes before going back outside.

H	M	E	K	H	I	S	O	D	G	W	R	D	A	Q
I	L	Y	T	U	O	K	Y	K	P	A	E	G	Z	T
A	E	I	I	N	D	O	O	R	S	T	D	B	J	A
T	A	K	G	P	H	O	P	J	F	E	N	K	G	L
W	D	J	I	H	P	Q	J	M	G	R	U	Z	R	P
M	S	E	E	R	T	L	L	A	T	S	H	W	S	R
N	D	O	T	Z	T	N	G	L	L	T	T	J	V	I
Q	D	O	R	Z	H	S	I	P	Y	T	L	J	W	V
E	G	J	R	T	Y	J	D	N	U	P	V	T	T	Q
V	I	A	Y	X	C	U	Y	N	G	W	Z	B	M	X
I	I	A	T	V	D	O	M	W	P	A	L	S	T	V
D	O	U	J	S	B	W	A	R	X	C	T	W	O	H
E	Y	E	S	J	P	P	P	R	B	O	F	M	Q	H
V	O	K	R	M	C	G	X	O	R	D	A	O	D	V
T	G	B	X	N	B	R	K	M	X	B	I	F	K	U