

SEPTEMBER 2024

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# Watts Working



**Working Every  
Day to Bring  
you Reliable  
Power**

A newsletter for the member-owners of



Randolph Electric  
Membership Corporation

# A Word About Randolph Electric

From CEO Dennis Mabe

## Balancing Costs and Member Benefits

### *A Focus on Members' Economic Participation*

Dear Member,

This month, I'd like to dive deeper into one of our seven cooperative principles, **Member Economic Participation**. This principle reflects how members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative.

Every product or service you buy from a business includes a margin, or profit, to ensure continued service and sustainability for the business. Your electric cooperative runs like a business but is actually a nonprofit. What sets the cooperative model apart from for-profit corporations is that the co-op returns those margins to our members in the form of capital credits.

To operate responsibly, your co-op must maintain a balance of offering affordable rates, investing in electric distribution and transmission reliability projects and returning capital credits.

Think of this balance in terms of a three-legged stool. The legs are 1) electric rates, 2) reliability improvements and 3) capital credits.

Any change in one of the legs has an impact on the other two. While the cooperative staff has done an outstanding job of



controlling costs and maintaining a high level of reliability, wholesale power cost increases continue to outpace our retail rate increases.

While we review our wholesale power costs on a monthly basis, these costs can fluctuate modestly or significantly from month to month. We try our best not to make any



sudden changes that would impact your electric bill. Instead, we adopt small, gradual changes to provide a smooth transition. We do this by implementing a charge through the WPCA (Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment), a line item on your bill.

Before May 2024, the WPCA has either been zero or a credit all the way back to 2013. As the industry experiences rising cost pressures, REMC reviews the WPCA and acts with good stewardship. This year in 2024, the board of directors did not authorize a general refund of capital credits. This was a strategic decision to maintain a delicate balance of rates, reliability projects and capital credits as well as to delay the cost impact to the members.

As we continue to see cost pressures, we must gradually increase the WPCA. In May 2024 the WPCA was a \$1.00 charge per 1,000 kWhs used. In August the WPCA was set to a \$3.00 charge per 1,000 kWhs used. Our statewide organization has recently signaled that we should expect additional increases in wholesale power costs for the remainder of the year. With this in mind, we will continue to use the WPCA to maintain the delicate balance of competitive rates, reliability investments and capital credits.

At Randolph EMC, our mission is to provide you with exceptional service and reliable electricity to power your home, business and life—all at the lowest possible cost. We are dedicated to keeping rates affordable, operating efficiently, and planning for your energy needs well into the future.

Cooperatively yours,

Dennis Mabe  
Chief Executive Officer

# Youth Tour Perspective

## *Postcards from the Tour*

Dear Randolph Electric Members,

Thank you for allowing me to take part in the amazing 2024 Youth Tour experience this past June.

Each electric cooperative advisor was very knowledgeable and kept the trip fun yet educational. I fully enjoyed all of the museums, monuments, tours and experiences we were provided. For me, the highlights of the trip were the Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum, the Kennedy Center Gospel Symphony, the National Cathedral and the Lincoln Memorial.

Learning about the history of electric co-ops in Washington, D.C., enlightened my understanding of how electricity has improved the quality of American life.

This trip also made me more aware of how much I appreciate my community.

Sincerely,

*Emma Grace Morgan*



Above: Emma Grace Morgan, a junior at North Moore High School, smiles on Capitol Hill. Emma represented REMC and joined 1,600 co-op participants for the 2024 Youth Tour from June 15–21.



Right: Emma (center back) poses with friends in the nation's capital. The Tour's goal is to educate tomorrow's leaders about the important role of rural electric co-ops in American history.



# Sports Scholarship Winners Train with Top Basketball Programs

Two local students practiced alongside athletes and coaches from top-ranked college basketball programs this summer, thanks to REMC's Touchstone Energy Sports Camp Scholarships.



## Touchstone Energy® Sports Camp Scholarships

“Addison and Lucas are outstanding students, athletes and community members,” said Nicole Arnold, communications and public affairs director at REMC. “We are proud to partner with two prestigious North Carolina universities to help provide such a unique learning experience for our local students and future leaders.”

The campers joined more than 50 electric cooperative scholarship winners statewide at the camps. Not only did they meet new friends and teammates, but they also stayed overnight in dorms and experienced life as a college student. At both camps, coaches and student-athletes worked directly with campers to develop basketball fundamentals and practice skills such as teamwork, to help them excel on and off the court.

Touchstone Energy Sports Camp scholarships are available each year as part of Randolph Electric's commitment to supporting youth and education in our communities.



Above: **Lucas Cushing**, a seventh-grader from West Middle School in Montgomery County, participated in the Carolina Basketball School led by head coach Hubert Davis at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



At left: **Addison Bowden**, a sixth-grader from Stars Charter School in Moore County, attended the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Camp at NC State University, led by head coach Wes Moore.

# Randolph EMC's PHP Board Awards 2024 Community Grants

*People Helping People Board of Directors Commemorates 10 Years of Giving Back*

In August, the People Helping People (PHP) Board of Directors announced awards totaling \$20,000 in community grants to benefit charitable nonprofits in Randolph Electric's five-county service area.

**"For 10 consecutive years, People Helping People has given back to communities in Randolph, Chatham, Moore, Montgomery and Alamance counties through the Sharing Success grant program,"** said REMC Communications and Public Affairs Director Nicole Arnold.

"The board is excited to announce these awards, which represent a significant investment in the organizations that help our members."

PHP, a nonprofit program of Randolph EMC, awards grants to organizations that contribute to one or more of the following three focus areas:

- **health** and well-being of individuals,
- **financial** support for income-challenged families or
- **educational** advancement through enriching learning opportunities.

The 17 recipient organizations listed here demonstrate these missions which align with the goals of the People Helping People grant-awarding program.

Randolph EMC partners with CoBank, a cooperative lender, to fund the Community Grants initiative. Through its Sharing Success program, CoBank awarded \$10,000 to PHP earlier this year. Randolph EMC then matched this donation to fund its Community Grants initiative.

The PHP Board of Directors oversees the grant-awarding process annually. Since 2015, Randolph EMC's PHP program has invested \$146,700 in local organizations that improve the quality of life of our members in our service territory.



## **Financial Focus**

- Communities in Schools of Montgomery County



## **Educational Focus**

- Chatham Literacy Council
- Arts Council of Moore County
- Spirit Horse Ranch Education Center
- Partners for Children and Families
- Infinite Minds Academy
- Happy Hills Animal Foundation
- Montgomery Community College Foundation



## **Health Focus**

- Randolph Senior Adults Association
- Union Taylors Community Action Center
- Chatham CARES Community Pharmacy
- Randolph Honor Guard
- Meals on Wheels of the Sandhills
- St. Joseph of the Pines Mobile Dental Clinic
- Love Chatham

# Stay Safe from Scams

## Recent Attempt Reported to Lure Randolph Electric Members

It's no secret that consumers with a water, gas or electricity connection have long been targets of utility scams.

As consumers have become more reliant on technology for work, school and commerce, savvy scammers have shifted their tactics to this changed environment.

Imposter scams are the number one type of fraud reported to the Federal Trade Commission.

While scam artists may come to your door posing as a utility worker who works for the "power company," in today's more connected world, attempts are more likely to come through an electronic device, via email, phone or text.

### A Recent Incident

*Names have been changed to ensure privacy.*

About a month ago, a member called REMC to report a phone fraud attempt involving his mother. Richard's 85-year-old mother, Mary, had received repeated phone calls over the previous week.

Each time the caller claimed to be from Randolph Electric. The caller applied pressure, saying that Mary's electric bill was unpaid. He demanded her credit card number for immediate payment.

When Mary hesitated, saying that she believed her power bill was paid in full, the caller became more aggressive. He threatened to disconnect her power that evening if she did not pay over the phone on the spot.

Although rattled, Mary kept her head about her. She did not divulge her personal information. Instead, she did something very smart:

### **Mary hung up the phone on the potential scammer.**

Next, Mary reached out to someone she trusted, her son. Richard quickly looked up his mother's power bill in her online account and confirmed that she was, indeed, paid up with no past due balance.

After learning that this harassment had continued all week with repeated calls to Mary, Richard called REMC to alert us to the scam.

Your electric cooperative appreciates that a member took the time to alert us, so that we can, in turn, educate you about these unfortunate, fraudulent activities. Here are some examples of different types of scams you may encounter.

## Common Types of Scams

### The "Overdue" Threat

A scammer may claim you are overdue on your electric bill and threaten to disconnect your service if you don't pay immediately. This is exactly the scam that Mary experienced.

Whether these threats are made in-person, by phone, text or email, the scammers want to scare you into immediate payment so you don't have time to think clearly.

If this happens over the phone, simply hang up. If you are concerned about your bill, call us at 336.625.5177. Our phone number can also be found on your monthly bill and on our website, [RandolphEMC.com](http://RandolphEMC.com).

If the scam is by email or text, delete it before taking any action. If you are unsure of the identity of the sender, you can use the mobile app or you can log in to your account online to check its status.

## BEWARE OF SCAMS!



### Protect yourself from scams.

- Keep your personal information safe.
- Do not click on a suspicious link.
- Hang up and then call Randolph Electric.
- Slow down and take back control.

Call Asheboro office at 336.625.5177

Call Robbins office at 910.948.3401

Remember, Randolph EMC will never attempt to demand immediate payment after just one notice.

### The “Money Back” Scam

Some scammers may falsely claim you have been overcharged on your bill and say they want to give a refund. It sounds easy. All you have to do is click or press a button to initiate the process. The scammer may even sound friendly and helpful, as if he or she is trying to save you money.

If you proceed, you will be prompted to provide banking or other personal information. Instead of money going into your bank account, the scammers can drain your account and use personal information such as a social security number for identity theft.

### Hang Up the Phone, Then Call REMC

If this “refund” scam happens over the phone, just hang up and block the phone number to prevent future robocalls. Then call REMC to report the scam. We will check your account and give you peace of mind.

### Do not Click on Email or Texts

If this scam attempt occurs via email, do not click any links in the message. Email scams are known as phishing attempts.

If you received a message via text, the same principle applies. Text, or SMS, scams that seek to access your private information are known as smishing schemes. Again, do not click any links. Instead, delete the message, and if possible, block the sender.

If you do overpay on your energy bill, Randolph EMC will automatically apply the credit to your next billing cycle. If you are in doubt about this, please contact us.



## DEFEND YOURSELF AGAINST SCAMS

*Here are some tips that will help keep you safe from scammers.*

- 1 Be wary of calls or texts from unknown numbers.
- 2 Be suspicious of an unknown person claiming to be a utility worker who requests banking or other personal information.
- 3 Never let anyone into your home that you don't know unless you have a scheduled appointment or reported a problem. Randolph Electric employees wear our logo on our uniforms and carry ID badges.
- 4 When we perform work on our members' property or come into your home, our employees are professionals and will always identify themselves.

We want to help protect our community against utility scams, and you can help create the first line of defense. Please report any potential scams to us so we can spread the word to prevent others in the community from falling victim.



Randolph Electric Membership Corporation provides safe and reliable power with exceptional value to more than 33,000 member accounts in Randolph, Moore, Montgomery, Chatham and Alamance counties.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### Electric Service

Asheboro ..... (336) 625-5177  
..... (800) 672-8212

Robbins: ..... (910) 948-3401  
..... (800) 868-7014

Report Outage ..... (877) REMC-OFF  
..... (877) 736-2633

### Account Info

& Bill Payments: ..... (877) 534-2319

Business Hours: ..... 8 am – 5 pm, M-F

### Board of Directors

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Visit Randolph EMC Online

[RandolphEMC.com](http://RandolphEMC.com)

**DEADLINE  
ALMOST  
HERE**



**Bright Ideas applications due  
Sept. 15**

Teachers, you have until Sept. 15, to submit an application for the REMC-funded award. To find the application or learn more about the program, visit [ncbrightideas.com](http://ncbrightideas.com).



*it's*  
**ELECTRIC**



**National Drive Electric Event**

**9 a.m. to Noon  
Friday, Sep. 27th  
North Carolina Zoo**

★ **H A P P Y** ★  
**Labor Day**

**Our offices will be closed  
Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup> for the holiday.**