

NOVEC *Cooperative* **Living**

GEARED UP FOR GAFF-N-GO

PAGE 8

Apprentice Technician
Walker Cline from the
Gretna District of
Mecklenburg Electric
Cooperative gets ready
to compete.

PHOTO BY JIM ROBERTSON





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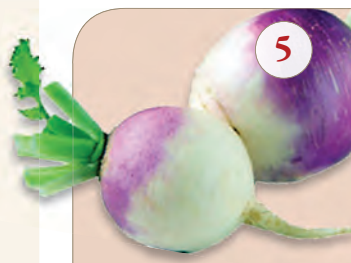
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VIEWPOINT

Not Our First Rodeo

We are now fully into the summer season, and what better way to kick it off than with our Fourth of July holiday, a significant event that commemorates the establishment of our great country. This holiday holds a special place in our hearts, not only for its historical significance but also for the joy it brings as we gather with our loved ones for fireworks, cookouts and various outdoor activities.

This month's feature story focuses on an extraordinary event for our lineworkers' families. We had a chance to celebrate our 20th-anniversary Gaff-n-Go Rodeo in record-setting fashion. There were over 300 lineworkers, teams from 11 states, a first-ever drone competition, expanded events for kids, and over 70 vendor booths. It is a unique event that brings everyone together in the spirit of friendly competition. Still, to me the absolute joy is watching a lineworker's child



stand in amazement as they watch their dad or mom perform the duties that usually happen only during the worst weather while everyone else is safe at home. The focus on getting the lights back on for our members safely is engrained in everything our cooperatives and lineworkers do.

Our July issue includes a feature on Miss Rodeo Virginia, a heartwarming article written by a Mecklenburg County teacher, and a story about Ms. Agvocate USA, who advocates agriculture in Anne Arundel County, Md. Of course, one of the main highlights of our July issue, as always, is the annual *Cooperative Living* Youth Art contest, where once again, our young artists were truly amazing.

We invite you to delve into this issue of *Cooperative Living* and look forward to your family joining us at next year's Gaff-n-Go Rodeo, scheduled for May 16 and 17 at Meadow Event Park in Doswell, Va. It's an event that promises to be as exciting and memorable as the ones before, and we look forward to seeing you there. ●

Brian S. Mosier

Brian S. Mosier, President & CEO
Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives

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To inform you about your cooperative and its efforts to serve your energy needs; how to use electricity safely and efficiently; and the people who define and enhance the quality of life in communities served by electric co-ops.

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Please recycle.



From left, Jake Bodley, Contract Forester; Jacoby Lipscomb, REC Forester; Delaney Long, Virginia Department of Forestry; and Adam Downing, Virginia Cooperative Extension

PHOTO COURTESY RAPPAHANNOCK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

Standing Tall

REC receives Tree Line USA designation for 23rd year

by Gregg MacDonald, Staff Writer

EVERY YEAR, RAPPAHANNOCK ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE'S VEGETATION MANAGEMENT TEAM and contractors play a critical role in improving the reliability of its members. They remove more than 20,000 hazard trees and clear over 1,500 miles of rights-of-way annually to prevent or reduce the likelihood of a power outage and improve reliability.

But their dedication goes way beyond trimming trees. They work with communities and local groups to give away and plant dozens of new trees. They also earn new certifications and learn new skills to ensure they perform at the highest levels for their member-owners.

In 2024, for the 23rd consecutive year, REC has been designated as a Tree Line USA utility by the National Arbor Day Foundation. "This designation demonstrates how trees and utilities can coexist for the benefit of communities and citizens," Delaney Long with the Virginia Department of Forestry explains.

This recognition not only validates REC's efforts but also instills confidence in the community about the cooperative's reliability and sustainability. "At REC, our vegetation management team sets the bar for utilities across the country in terms of best practices for pruning, the use of technology, and also our commitment to continuing education — not only for our foresters and contractors, but also for the communities we serve," adds Cindy Devlin Musick, senior director of vegetation management services. "The Tree Line USA designation is a true honor."

REC's reach is extensive, providing electric service to over 178,000 connections and maintaining more than 18,000 miles of power within 22 Virginia counties. ●

1920s Style for a 1920s Price

It was a warm summer afternoon and my wife and I were mingling with the best of them. The occasion was a 1920s-themed party, and everyone was dressed to the nines. Parked on the manse's circular driveway was a beautiful classic convertible. It was here that I got the idea for our new 1920s Retrograde Watch.

We carefully climbed into the car's long front seat. Among the many opulent features on display was a series of dashboard dials that accentuated the car's lavish aura. One of those dials inspired our 1920s Retrograde Watch, a genuinely unique timepiece that marries timeless style with modern technology.

With its remarkable retrograde hour and minute indicators, sunburst guilloché face and precision movement, this design is truly one of a kind. What does retrograde mean? Instead of displaying the hands rotating on an axis like most watches, the hands sweep in a semicircle, then return to their starting point and begin all over again.

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Service Through Sacrifice

For NOVEC foreman, work is a family affair

by Jim Robertson, Staff Writer

A former servant to his country as a U.S. Coast Guardsman, Kyle Sarvis has served the members of Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative for nearly 13 years. The line crew foreman and his wife, Tristin, have two children who were excited to cheer for their daddy at this year's Gaff-n-Go Rodeo.

"Kyle became a lineman six months after we got married," says Tristin, whose father also served as a Coast Guardsman. "I've never been prouder of him."

Linework is a demanding profession that is accompanied by many sacrifices, including holidays, birthdays and other milestone events. "As hard as it is for us, it's even harder for the guys," says Tristin. "But they're out supporting their families and strangers' families in times of need." That includes a power outage on Christmas in frigid conditions, getting soaked in a three-day rainstorm, and dodging falling tree limbs in 60-mph winds.

For Sarvis, not a day goes by without his loving wife worrying. "There isn't a single job they have where something couldn't go wrong," she says. Tristin is appreciative of Kyle's commitment to safety — no shortcuts. As a foreman, his No. 1 priority is ensuring all crew members return home safely to their families. He brings that lifestyle home with him too. Safety is everything.



Kyle Sarvis (left) holds his son, Karsen, on his shoulders while his daughter, Beau, is held by coworker Chris Fasenmyer so they both could be with their father at the awards banquet following the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo.



PHOTOS BY JIM ROBERTSON

AN ATMOSPHERE OF SUPPORT

Tristin and the kids were at the Gaff-n-Go rodeo this year to support Kyle. "I have attended at least 10 rodeos," she says. "The sheer determination and dedication you see from them is astonishing. Most of the atmosphere there are wives or family members supporting their husbands, brothers, fathers, friends or even coworkers. All around you see pillars of support."

"My son, Karsen, kept saying Daddy was like a monkey and goes super-fast! And my daughter, Beau, of course, is such a daddy's girl that she couldn't help but worry. They cheered for the team and, afterwards, wouldn't leave their side."

A ROLE MODEL

Working for a cooperative is often described as being part of a co-op family, and that includes the employee's spouse and children. Tristin values the relationships she has with the spouses of Kyle's coworkers.

"There's been times when other wives will reach out to Kyle for Christmas gift ideas for their husbands since they are on the same crew," she says. "A lot of these women I've known since Kyle started working. I've seen their kids grow up. They have seen us before kids and now, with two and another on the way."

Finding the right words is challenging for Tristin to adequately tell Kyle how unbelievably proud they are to have him. "He's an amazing father who shows his children what's it's like to work hard, lead without hesitation, and, if you're not sure, find out the answer."

Kyle's crew members share her sentiment. They appreciate his willingness to climb into the bucket with them and provide as much instruction as possible regarding new tasks or approaches to those tasks.

Tristin describes the best part of her day as seeing how her kids' faces light up when they are outside playing, and they see Kyle's truck pull into the driveway. "They yell, 'Mommy, Daddy's home!' Watching them literally climb his legs to get close to him while he has all his bags in his hands. Still, he holds them, comes to me, hugs me, kisses me and asks me how my day was." ●

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Slowing Pains

A nutritional approach for easing chronic pain

by Vanessa LaFaso Stolarski, Contributing Columnist

Some people claim to be able to predict the weather by joint pain flare-ups, but barometric pressure isn't the only culprit and medicine isn't always the only answer. While medications may provide some temporary relief, some come with undesirable side effects. Fortunately, the foods we eat can also play a powerful role in reducing inflammation and alleviating chronic joint pain.

Inflammation is a common trigger for most chronic pain conditions. When the body senses injury, it prompts the release of fluid. This system is a natural mechanism designed to protect the affected area from further damage. The fluid surrounds organs or joints like a bubble until healing is complete. However, just as any organic matter will do when submerged in liquid for too long, the tissue will eventually degrade and break down. This is why prolonged inflammation is often a catalyst to other serious health conditions.

Understand the root cause of chronic joint pain and harness the healing power of nutrition with the following strategies:

EMBRACE OMEGA-3S

Omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish such as salmon and sardines, as well as in plant sources like walnuts and flaxseeds, are potent anti-inflammatory powerhouses. These healthy fats help



PHOTO COURTESY JAKUB KAPUSNIAK FROM STOCKMARIO



regulate the body's anti-inflammatory response, which reduces swelling and alleviates pain. Aim for 2,000-3,000 mg daily.

LOAD UP ON ANTIOXIDANTS

Berries, turmeric and leafy greens like mustard, beets or turnips can neutralize harmful free radicals and combat inflammation. These natural compounds not only reduce inflammation but also protect against chronic diseases.



PHOTO BY THEBETTENDROP.COM VIA FLICKR COMMONS

LIMIT INFLAMMATORY FOODS

Nobody says you have to completely eliminate french fries from your life, but too much of a good thing can exacerbate pain. Processed meats, fried foods and sugary beverages are known to promote inflammation and should be limited.

STAY HYDRATED

Water helps flush out toxins and supports the body's natural healing process. Aim to drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses daily and incorporate hydrating fruits and vegetables like cucumbers, watermelon and tomatoes into your diet.

CONSIDER SUPPLEMENTS

While a well-balanced diet should be the foundation of any anti-inflammatory approach, certain supplements can provide additional support. Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, has been shown to have potent anti-inflammatory properties. Other supplements like fish oil, ginger and bromelain (an enzyme found in pineapples) may also help.

Remember, chronic pain management is relative to the individual, and nutrition is just one piece of the puzzle. Consult with a healthcare professional or registered dietitian to develop a comprehensive plan tailored to your specific needs and health conditions. •



PHOTO BY STEVEBUSSINE VIA FREE RANGE STOCK

Vanessa LaFaso Stolarski is a certified nutrition counselor, weightlifting coach, life coach and stress-management specialist.

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Taking a Challenge by the Horns

Maryland woman educates as Ms. Agvocate USA

by Sean Clougherty, Delmarva Farmer

Growing up on a farm in a predominantly suburban part of Anne Arundel County, Md., Lindsey Jacobs often got many questions from the public when showing her Hereford beef cattle.

It helped form her sense of advocacy for the industry, which she is now embarking on more formally as Ms. Agvocate USA 2024.

The Miss Agvocate USA program was launched in 2023 to help young women promote the farming industry. According to its website, 14 “agvocacy” titles range from young child to adult. Jacobs took on her new role as Ms. Agvocate USA 2024 in March. She is now working to interact with the public as much as possible to share her story in person and through social media.

Jacobs says she’s been in contact with the popular Maryland Public Television program, “Maryland Farm and Harvest,” about possibly being featured in an upcoming episode. She hopes to connect with more groups

and events to better inform the public about Maryland farming.

“I spent April and May emailing everyone I could possibly think of, and now things are just starting to come together,” she says.

Jacobs graduated from the University of Maryland in 2020 with a degree in agriculture and natural resource economics and is currently pursuing a graduate degree in food service and biosecurity at Virginia Tech.

Her family’s Church View Farm grew multiple crops in the early 1900s. However, it didn’t start breeding registered Polled Hereford cattle until the 1960s while maintaining about 400 acres of hay and pastureland. Jacobs’ grandfather, William E. Baldwin III, mother, Tara, and brother, Anthony, keep the operation going. “We’re a farm surrounded by suburbia and a half,” Jacobs laughs.

As a livestock exhibitor going to county and state fairs, Jacobs says she’s gotten many “mind-blowing” questions

and comments about her animals from the public.

One that stands out in particular to her was from a fairgoer who insisted Jacobs’ cows were not beef cattle because they had udders, which the fairgoer claimed beef animals don’t have.

“We’ve had some experiences,” she says, “It all comes down to basic education and public awareness.”

As one of the few farm kids in her school growing up, Jacobs says she always educated her classmates when they were curious about livestock farming.

“I was kind of always doing it anyway and not really thinking about it,” she says of her early advocacy. “Now I get to educate more people than ever. ●



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A Showcase of Safety and Skill

Lineworker rodeo promotes camaraderie, development, peace of mind

by Jim Robertson, Staff Writer

A lineman receives a phone call on a stormy night. The power is out. The kids are asleep. His wife nervously smiles as she tells him goodbye and to be safe. She, like many other spouses and loved ones, has never actually witnessed him in action on the job.

For the past two decades, the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo has provided a stage for utility lineworkers and equipment operators to showcase the skills and hard work required to safely perform their jobs — rain or shine. Wide-eyed children, spouses and parents often watch in awe as lineworkers climb to the tops of 40-foot poles, sometimes in driving rain. The rodeo simulates real-life scenarios.

This past May was the 20th anniversary of the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo, now the largest regional event of its kind in the U.S. It attracted more than 300 lineworkers from 11 states as far away as Arizona and California. The two-day event was hosted by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives at Meadow Event Park in Doswell, Va.

“This wonderful event continues to set a high bar, especially from the perspective of commitment to safety and excellence,” says Steve Harmon, Gaff-n-Go Rodeo committee chair and Community Electric Cooperative president and CEO. “It is extremely rewarding, and even somewhat emotional to see the families interact and observe their parent display their skills.”



Jake Parker, ANEC, competes with his team in the equipment operator portion of the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo.

A FAMILY EVENT

“Having my family there is always a great feeling,” says A&N Electric Cooperative journeyman Jake Parker. “Hearing my almost 2-year-old on the sideline this year screaming ‘Go Daddy, go Daddy!’ was also a great feeling.” Parker’s wife, Taylor, and daughter wore custom T-shirts for the second straight year. The Parker family has been there to support Dad each year in all types of weather — heat, cold and pouring rain. They’re proud of him no matter what the results are, as long he comes home safely each day.

“For us, the rodeo is another family event,” says Patricia Parker, who followed

her son to every event again this year. “We get to watch our son compete and the opportunity to spend the weekend with our daughter-in-law and granddaughter.”



Parker's wife, Taylor, and their daughter

PHOTO BY JAY DIEM

PHOTO BY JAY DIEM



“Having my family there is always a great feeling.”

— Jake Parker, A&N Electric Cooperative journeyman

With several lineworkers competing in their first rodeo, their nervousness was mirrored by the loved ones who came to show support. Spouses, children, parents, friends and coworkers gathered throughout the event field as competitors displayed the skills, strength and hard work required to keep the lights on.

Choptank Electric Cooperative apprentice Mason Johnson, competing in his first rodeo, describes the experience as nerve-wracking. He says, “I get up there. I’m literally shaking in my boots, trying to figure out what I’m going to do, and I just so happened to catch my son laughing in the

background. I turned around to look at him and thought to myself, ‘That’s what this is all for.’ It took the nerves right away because I knew that’s all that matters. My family’s here watching me, and you really can’t beat that.”

Rappahannock Electric Cooperative apprentice Zach Carlisle, also attending his first rodeo, was supported by his wife, Jessica, and their baby boy, Rudy, cheering him on. “I’ve never seen him climb before,” says a nervous Jessica as Zach prepares for the pole-top rescue event. “When you’re at home and they go to work, you really don’t think about it. But, when you see it firsthand, it kind of sinks in ... how scary their job actually is.”

The Gaff-n-Go Rodeo is intentionally planned as a family event. With vendor booths, food trucks, apparel sales, and a variety of youth activities for children of all ages, loved ones — children especially — can stay entertained while waiting to cheer on their lineworkers at each event.

Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative’s Jake Till values the time spent with his family each year. His parents and fiancée have supported him for the past three years at the annual rodeo. “It makes you feel good having people who care about you come out and support you, especially in the rain and mud,” says Till. “I also really like answering all their questions about the rodeo and linework in general.”

Taylor Waples, whose fiancée, Cole Baker, competed for Delaware Electric Cooperative, says that in addition to the excitement, hard work and dedication that goes into preparing for the rodeo, she enjoyed seeing families and coworkers cheering for DEC lineworkers. “I also got to witness our son, Reed, cheering his daddy on for the first time this year,” she says about her third experience at the Gaff-n-Go Rodeo.

PRIDE AND CONCERN

Waples is proud of her soon-to-be husband for finding a career that he loves shortly after graduating from high school. “He comes home every night and tells me about his day and all of the new things he learned,” she says. “One of my favorite things is when we’re driving and he says, ‘I did that pole,’ with a big smile on his face.”

Recognizing the hazardous nature of a lineworker’s job, Waples also says, “What worries me is one mistake could make a life-altering change, causing him to not come home to his family.” The emphasis on safety is strictly enforced at the rodeo and every day on the job.

“I know linework is a very dangerous job, and I worry about Jake every day,” says Patricia Parker, Jake Parker’s mother. “I am reassured that his employer [ANEC] stresses safety first. Linemen look out for one another. That is how I get to sleep each night.”

Parker’s parents are proud of the work he does, performing a service to the community every day. “The community truly respects and appreciates all our

(continued on page 10)



Safety and Skill

(continued from page 9)

linemen do,” says Patricia Parker, “and that is what makes me most proud.”

“Being that this was our first lineman rodeo experience, I had no idea what to expect,” admits Izabelle Lomax, who is engaged to Mason Johnson. “Since we have an almost-one-year-old, it’s even more important to me now that he is safe and able to return home to us every day. The emphasis on safety at the rodeo was extremely comforting.”

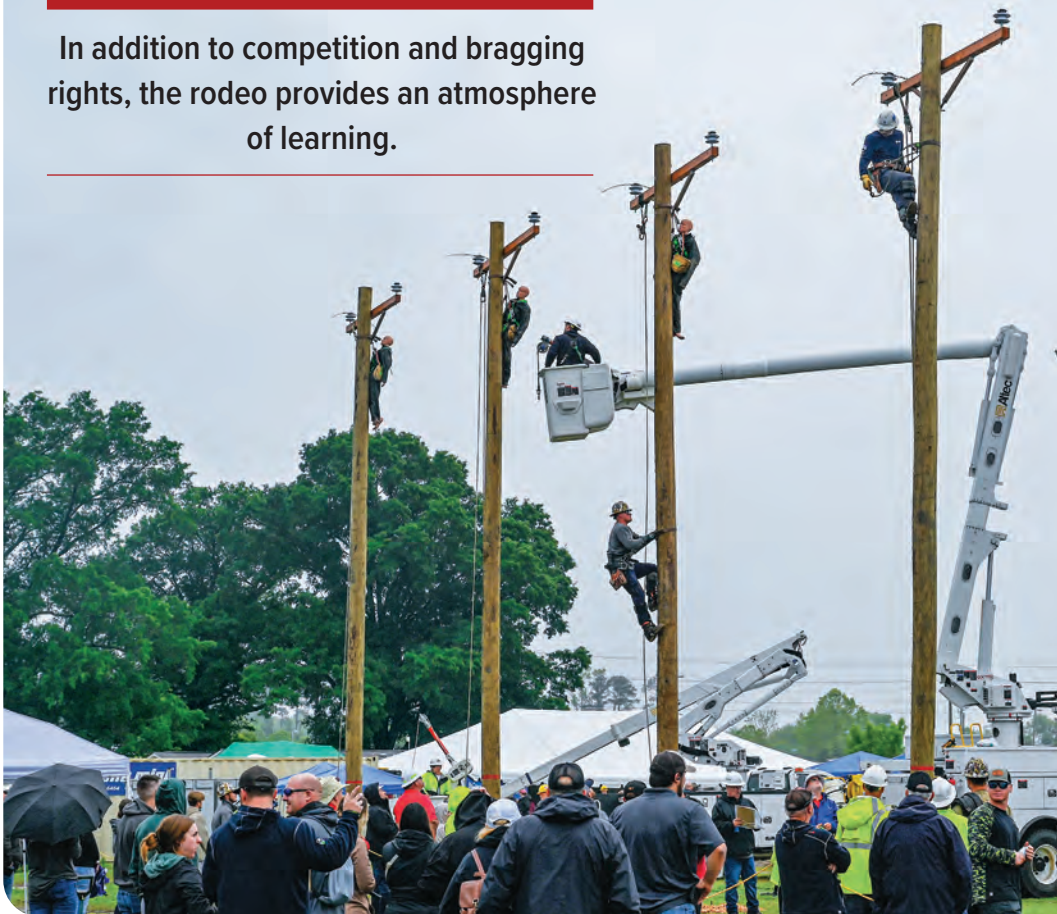
WHY THEY COMPETE

Linework can be exhausting, especially in extreme conditions, but according to Till, participating in the rodeo is one of his favorite things to do at work. Competing with coworkers and building camaraderie can be highly rewarding. “My absolute favorite part is watching the growth of the new apprentices during their first rodeo,” he says. “The confidence they gain in their ability to climb proficiently is incredible.”



Mason Johnson with his fiancée, Izabelle, and their son

In addition to competition and bragging rights, the rodeo provides an atmosphere of learning.



The rodeo is an amazing time to meet your coworkers’ families and spend time with your own.”

“Watching the rodeo gives us the opportunity to see Jake perform tasks he does every day at work,” says Patricia Parker. “Safety is a priority at the rodeo, and the linemen are scored heavily on how safely they perform.” The Parker family compares the enjoyment of attending the rodeo with sitting in the stands and cheering for their sons at sporting events while they were young.

Parker is motivated to compete each year by the opportunity to show people what linework is all about. He says, “Having an event like this shows family, friends and the public what we do on a daily basis.”

In addition to competition and bragging rights, the rodeo provides an atmosphere for learning. Apprentices and journeymen pay close attention to their colleagues from other co-ops and other states looking for ways to improve their approaches to various tasks.

“It’s awesome how all of the guys cheer each other on and give each other helpful tips before and during the events,” says Olivia Miller, who is engaged to Till. “There is a great sense of camaraderie. You can tell there are a lot of good mentors among the journeymen and leads.”

A memory from this year’s rodeo that stands out for Lomax is attending the awards banquet that attracted more than 1,000 people. “Although it was exciting to see Choptank bring home a few awards,” she says, “it was endearing to see how everyone was supportive of each other, whether they worked together daily or not.” ●

► See the results from the 20th annual Gaff-n-Go Rodeo at gaff-n-go.com.

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*Mecklenburg County, Va., teacher
recalls father's passion for gardening*

by Michelle Greene Dean, Contributing Writer



To most people, a jar of canned string beans is just that: a jar of canned string beans. Some feel that canning any vegetable is unnecessary. They say, “Just buy them in the supermarket. Why waste all that time, water and energy doing it yourself?”

I would like to counter that canning vegetables is a spiritually rewarding effort. Looking at all the jars lined up on my pantry shelves, in all their sundry colors, they remind me of bountiful summers and a job well done.

I am thankful for the many blessings of the summers, especially those with plentiful rain, like last summer. When I look at those jars, I remember the mornings picking those beans. The warm ones, windy ones, cool ones and cloudy ones; just my family and I, and the



garden for as long as I can remember. He used a Farmall-140 tractor to plant each row straight as an arrow. He kept weeds at bay with a garden hoe that he owned for who knows how long. That particular hoe is special to me. The metal blade once had two pointed corners but they are now smooth and rounded; a symbol of Daddy's dedication and hard work to keep the garden weed-free. He enjoyed growing and sharing fresh produce with his family and neighbors, and that memory makes me smile.

Rural living is where memories are made daily. For me, those memories are precious, as we lost Daddy in 2020. As I weed and pick the produce in his garden now, memories of him can't



Lawrence Ray Greene, above, in his garden and, left, on his tractor. He was known to many as “High Pockets” because he was 6 feet, 6 inches tall.

PHOTOS COURTESY MICHELLE GREENE DEAN

mockingbirds in the cedar tree beside the garden.

As I was picking several rows of string beans last summer, I was reminded of how Daddy worked in this

help but flood my soul.

As my family sits down for supper (it's not called dinner where I'm from) at the end of the harvest season, we talk about how many quarts or pints we canned, and what we might do differently next year. We also discuss what seed varieties might grow best in our sandy-loam soil. These conversations continue until the pie is served. It's all part of a “take pride in your work” thing; a concept Daddy taught us, and one that we continue to live by. ●



BEAT THE HEAT ... AND SAVE SOME MONEY



Virginia in July means rising temperatures and humidity. For NOVEC customers, however, the summer heat doesn't have to mean rising electric bills.

Whether it's something as simple as changing the rotation of your ceiling fan, or something high tech like installing a smart thermostat, you can count on NOVEC for helpful suggestions to reduce your energy use during the hottest part of the year.

And while we're all looking for ways to stretch the value of a dollar these days, you might be interested to know that NOVEC currently has the lowest residential rates among the regulated electric utilities in Virginia. This Co-op is committed to being efficient and financially responsible, and to keep electric service affordable for all customers.

Do you want to take additional steps around the house to stay cool and comfortable? When you visit NOVEC's website, you'll see "ways to save" right at the top of your screen. Open that menu for a wide-ranging list of summer energy tips you can use right away. You'll also find a series of videos — all shorter than 30 seconds — with more suggestions for conserving energy and saving money.

Finally, summer is also storm season, so make sure you have fresh batteries in your flashlights and have an emergency plan for special family or medical needs. While NOVEC boasts best-in-class reliability, Mother Nature sometimes has other thoughts. Stay away from downed wires and report power outages to assist in our restoration efforts.

Best Regards,

Dave Schleicher

NOVEC VALUES

- | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------|
| • Integrity | • Safety | • Excellence |
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For updates, tips on safety, energy savings ideas, and career information, find us on social media or go to novec.com.

NOVEC is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ENERGY TIP OF THE MONTH

Cleaning the inside of your refrigerator is essential for optimal energy and cooling performance, as well as ensuring your family's health. Wiping down shelves, drawers, and interior walls can help eliminate stains and odors. It also helps clear away mold spores and bacteria that can spoil food.



NOVEC PUTS IN STRONG SHOWING AT SOGGY GAFF-N-GO

By Robin Earl



The 2024 Gaff-n-Go Lineworkers Rodeo was held in May as usual, only with a lot more mud. Despite an unrelenting rain, almost 300 lineworkers from around the country competed in the two-day event, sponsored by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives, and held at the Meadow Event Park in Doswell.

The lineworkers in NOVEC's 19-member squad earned three gold medals and a silver, and 12 events finished with NOVEC in the top 20.

The weather served as a reminder that difficult conditions are nothing new for lineworkers, who work in all conditions to keep the lights on. NOVEC Journeyman Kyle Sarvis said the rain certainly presented challenges. When equipment is soaked, he said, "everything is heavier." He put on his thick protective gloves. "These get really slippery. Imagine trying to manipulate wires using these."

Journeyman Brian Savage added, "We are used to working in the rain, but the difference here is that we must do it under the pressure of a stopwatch, while ensuring all safety protocols are strictly followed."



(Left) NOVEC Apprentice Jeremy Jenkins competes in the Hurtman Rescue. (Above) NOVEC lineworkers all wore shirts with an original design inspired by Sasquatch.

NOVEC System Construction Supervisor Jesse Taylor said, “Safety is first and foremost. Proper procedures and safe work practices are strictly enforced by the event judges; any infractions result in point deductions. Something as simple as dropping a washer will result in a (points deduction) gig. One gig for your team and you will automatically be ranked lower than any team with no gigs.

“If you expect your performance to be competitive, it must be very near perfection. That is why I’m so proud of our NOVEC team. They work hard and train hard. They are competing against the best of the best and winning.”

On May 18, apprentice lineworkers and more experienced journeymen rotated among a sea of electric poles. Working solo or in teams and equipped with the tools of their trade, they performed the tasks they do every day – quickly, but without compromising safety.

NOVEC Apprentice Evan Bache placed first in climbing skills and first aid, and second in the Hurtman Rescue challenge, where a lineworker climbs the pole to “rescue” a fellow lineman who is hurt and unable to climb down. A mannequin fills the role of the injured person. Johnny Lanzetta placed fifth and Jake Till took sixth in the Hurtman event.

NOVEC also delivered a strong showing in the apprentice climbing skills competition, with five of the top 15 performances, including Connor Jost, Jeremy Jenkins, and Johnny Lanzetta finishing sixth, seventh, and eighth, respectively.

For the NOVEC journeymen, the team of Preston Toms, Kyle Sarvis, and Chris Fasenmyer placed third in the team Hurtman Rescue event.

NOVEC’s equipment operator team of Anthony Helsley, Robbie Studds, and Ben Williams placed first in the Bucket Truck Hurtman Rescue event. The same team also took fourth in the Cutout-Change Bucket Rescue event.

Eight NOVEC representatives acted as judges during the Gaff-n-Go: Eric Stuart, Steve Rector, Shawn Davis, Scotty Sheffield, Norman Tapp, Roy Robinson, Matt Grenke, and Hector Hyre.

Co-workers and families of participants were out in force to support the NOVEC team. Before accepting the inevitable, some moms tried to keep their kids out of the mud. There was a brief panic when 3-year-old Beau Sarvis’s pink purse hit the ground, but mom Tristin took it all in stride. “It’ll wash off, honey.”



NOVEC’s Timmy Corbin completes the Apprentice Secondary Wire Down event.



Apprentice Evan Bache nabbed two first place awards and a second place award at the 2024 Gaff-n-Go.

NOVEC Youth Writing Contest Winners

5 TO 9-YEAR-OLD WINNER

Author:

Vincent Torres

Age: 8

Hometown: Oakton



A sample from "The Electric Sword": "Darkness says, 'I need to get that electric sword.' Darkness looks like a silhouette of a person. Darkness has a scheme. He will take out the light in the world and put it in a bag in his lair. His lair is hidden in another world. Darkness tries to use a lasso to take the electric sword from Tim. All that happens is Darkness grabs a bag of Cheetos."

10 TO 13-YEAR-OLD WINNER

Author:

Kennedy Woldearegay

Age: 11

Hometown: Montclair

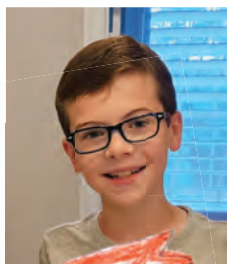


A sample from "Circuit of Fate": "Max became the city's youngest superhero. Armed with a soldering iron and a backpack full of Pop-Tarts, Max rewired lamp posts into ultra amazing neon disco balls (okay, not really, but it would've been epic)! The mayor sent robot enforcers (metallic poodles with laser eyes) to chase Max."

HONORABLE MENTION

Author and Illustrator:

Brendan Payne



NOVEC awarded 9-year-old Brendan Payne of Haymarket an honorable mention because he went above and beyond the assignment to create a comic book version of his story, "Electro Man!"



Young Authors are Powered by Imagination

By Robin Earl

NOVEC sent out the call and young writers answered. Twenty-three children between the ages of 5 and 13 made electricity the hero of their original stories. Their creativity and imaginations ran wild, and NOVEC even received some bonus content — illustrations to accompany the masterpieces.

In the 5- to 9-year-old division, 9-year-old Akilan Prasanna of Aldie wrote about Prince Cevon (NOVEC spelled backward), in a story called “The Thunder Throne.”

“Cevon threw his shoes on and said, ‘Zap! Blap! Make me go fast!’ boosting out of the house to a far-out mountain. He grunted and ran in a few circles and out of all his fingers came a bright blue electricity, which formed a portal to the most unreachable place on Earth, New Volt Kingdom. There, a group called the Lighters produced electricity for the world!”

Leni Woodson, 6, of Manassas, wrote about what happened when the lights went out. When the power returned, she wrote, “The family thanked the police one hundred billion times and Superhero NOVEC was very happy. The family knew that electricity is important in the whole entire universe because it saves them from the bad guys. After that no more bad guys went into their house because they have electricity.”

Neri Hilgart, 9, of Clifton, wrote about a girl named Lily who was called upon to save the day and restore

power. “ ‘Now go little girl,’ Mister Electricity calls. So Lily goes on her journey. She travels the mountains in search of the gem. After 50 minutes she finds it glistening in the darkness, the only thing she could see. She grabbed it. It was like the entire world just changed. The world was light again.”

Penelope Jolley, 7, of Bristow was the star of her own story. “I became all lighted and I went outside and my neighbors saw me lighted. They were scared for a moment until they realized I bring the light to them and they called me ‘Super Electricity,’ the hero of the neighborhood.”

In a story called “Electricity is our Hero!” Allison Van Horne, 6, of Aldie, wrote about a lost village of gnomes. “... the gnomes were happy but also worried ... the sneaky ... wizard lizard and her black crow were hatching a plan to take all of the electricity.”



In the older division, 11-year-old Amelia Rangel of Bristow, wrote about a trio of superheroes — somewhere between the Powerpuff Girls and Charlie’s Angels — powered with electricity.

Brooke Coulter, 11, of Manassas, also wrote about a superhero. Electro Girl works undercover at NOVEC and — with help from fellow superheroes Charged Up, Lightning Bolt, and Gauge — saves Manassas from monsters.

Gabriella Clevenger, 10, of South Riding, wrote about a world without light. The mother of the girl in the story told her, “darkness is an opportunity to make light.” In the end, that’s what she did.

Twelve-year-old Meha Seshan from Ashburn wrote “Sparks of Destiny.” “It was a dark and stormy night, as Richard and Rose were watching TV on the couch, relaxing. When suddenly, ZAP! Everything shut down. The house was pitch dark as the kids, Sam and Selina, ran down as fast as a cheetah and screeched so loud that the whole community felt an earthquake.

“... ‘No need to panic,’ Rich declared as he went downstairs to see what was wrong with the electricity in the house. ‘OH NOOOO!!!! THERE IS A BUG IN THE ELECTRIC PANEL!’ Rich approached slowly as he looked perplexed. ‘Kids, NOW you can panic!’ ”

Luke Gulick, 10, of Warrenton, wrote about Super Electricity Boy, who saved the mayor from the bottom of a cliff when the power grid went down. “Once he saved the mayor, he asked, ‘Why did you fall in the first place?’

“He replied, ‘So a 10-year-old boy could enter in the NOVEC youth writing contest.’ ”

A Walk in the Woods

Protect yourself and your family from tick-borne diseases

By Robin Earl



Northern Virginia offers a plethora of wild areas that can be beneficial for body and soul, but make sure your date with Mother Nature doesn't come with unintended consequences.

Higher-than-normal temperatures so far this year mean that ticks may be especially active this summer and fall. The tiny arachnids can transmit serious illnesses, including Lyme disease and Alpha-gal food allergy (an allergy to red meat), as well as some life-threatening diseases like Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

In Virginia, blacklegged ticks, Lone Star ticks, and American dog ticks live mainly in leaves on forest floors or in shaded, grassy areas, where they wait for a host — human or animal — to pass by.

The Centers for Disease Control offers some tips for avoiding tick bites and the diseases they may carry.

BEFORE YOUR WALK

- Buy clothing pretreated with the insect repellent “permethrin” or pretreat your own clothes and shoes with permethrin; its effects will last for several months. Dried permethrin spray will remain active even after several washes, killing ticks before they bite. You must apply it to clothing a few days before hitting the trail to allow it to properly dry.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET, picaridin, IR 3535, 2-undecanone, or oil of lemon eucalyptus on skin or clothing. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends using products containing less than 30% DEET on children. Do not use insect repellent on babies under 2 months old. Oil of lemon eucalyptus should never be used for children under 3 years of age. Para-menthane-diol is another compound that is safe for adults, but not recommended for children, according to the AAP.
- Use a tick prevention product — pills, sprays or collars — for your dog. Talk to your vet about the best options for your pet.
- Tuck pants legs into socks to prevent ticks from climbing up your shoes and socks onto your skin. Forcing ticks to climb up the outside of your clothing will help you spot and remove them before they can attach.

AFTER YOUR WALK

- Check clothing after spending time in places where ticks might be hiding. You can tumble dry clothing on high heat for 10 minutes to kill any ticks you may have missed.
- Check your body for ticks. They may be tiny and hard to spot, so be sure to check these places carefully: armpit, groin, belly button, waist, in and around ears and hairline, or the back of knees.
- Don't forget to check children and pets.
- The Virginia Department of Health recommends that if you do find a tick attached to your skin, use a tweezer to grasp the tick as close as possible to the skin. Pull upward, with steady even pressure, until the tick releases. Clean the skin and bite area with rubbing alcohol or soap and warm water. Save the tick in a bag or container with rubbing alcohol for identification in case an illness develops later.
- One of the most common symptoms of Lyme disease is a bull's-eye rash surrounding the bite. If you see the bull's-eye, contact your doctor.

Watch for Tree-Trimming Crews This Summer

By Robin Earl

While NOVEC doesn't own the trees in its power line rights-of-way, the Co-op works to keep the power lines clear as part of a commitment to reliable electric service. Maintenance crews trim trees and mow undergrowth on a rotating basis, and they respond to reports from customers about trees that may be too close to power lines.

Proactive tree maintenance can help prevent outages, particularly during summer storms. Call 703-335-0500 to report a potential problem.

The crews will break down smaller branches, but large segments of wood left behind are the landowner's responsibility.

Save the Date

NOVEC's Annual Meeting will be held at 6 p.m. on Sept. 18

NOVEC Board Chairman Wade House and President and CEO David Schleicher will review 2023 accomplishments and discuss current Co-op initiatives at the Annual Meeting.

Members also will elect two directors to represent Districts 4 and 5 for four-year terms (see the district map at novec.com/bod). Nominations are due by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, July 10.

The meeting will be held at NOVEC Gainesville Technical Center at 5399 Wellington Branch Drive, Gainesville, VA 20155. Visit novec.com/annualmeeting or call NOVEC's Customer Care Center at 703-335-0500 for details and updates prior to the meeting.

3 WAYS TO SEAL IN COMFORT

In addition to increased comfort, weatherizing your home is an excellent way to save energy and lower your cooling and heating costs. Here are three ways you can seal in comfort and savings.

- Caulk**
Apply caulk around cracks and openings between stationary components like door frames and window frames.
- Weatherstripping**
Install weatherstripping around components that move, like doors and operable windows.
- Insulate**
Adding insulation is an effective weatherization strategy, especially for older homes. Consider additional insulation in areas like an unfinished attic, exterior walls and floors above uninsulated spaces.

NOVEC HELPS

Hands Engaged In Local Public Service

NOVEC HELPS Hosts 12th Annual Golf Tournament *Event raises record-shattering \$50,000*

By Jenny Shaskan

On May 16, NOVEC HELPS hosted 116 golfers at Bull Run Golf Club in Haymarket. Participants enjoyed beautiful weather, a round of golf, and a putting contest. Player entries and sponsor donations generated \$50,524 for the NOVEC employee-run 501(c)(3), shattering the previous tournament record by more than \$10,000.

Proceeds from the golf tournament will support NOVEC HELPS contributions and events throughout the year. In 2023, NOVEC HELPS provided financial support to 67 area health, shelter, youth, and veterans' organizations.

NOVEC HELPS leadership thanked the sponsors as well as nearly 60 NOVEC employees for making the

golf tournament such a runaway success. The tournament attracted more than 33 sponsors, and eight companies — Bradley Electro Sales Corp., Burns & McDonnell, Lee Electrical Construction Inc., Stack Infrastructure, Yondr, Elliot, Amazon Web Services, and The Okonite Company — took the lead as platinum sponsors.

"This was the most successful tournament we've held," said event organizer Pam Rochon. "We are so thankful for the continued support of our sponsors, volunteers, and co-workers for making it all possible. They made this the best event to date, and now NOVEC HELPS can support even more people throughout the community."



From left, Lisa Hooker, NOVEC's acting vice president of customer engagement; Cason Garrison, supervisor, system construction; and Rory Sweeney, principal PJM and FERC regulatory lead, finish up at the 18th hole.



Arnold Singleton, vice president of engineering, lines up a putt. Spencer Feight, district sales manager at Okonite, assists.

NOVEC HELPS, Hands Engaged in Local Public Service, is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization of NOVEC employees who volunteer their time to help others and engage other employees in community service projects. The NOVEC HELPS board of directors votes on programs and events to support, whether with financial donations or with feet on the ground.

Learn more at novechelps.org. Follow NOVEC HELPS on facebook.com/novechelps.



Grit, Guts and Glamour

Meet Miss Rodeo Virginia 2024

by Laura Emery, Staff Writer

This certainly isn't her first rodeo. Autumn Rogers, 23, of Gordonsville, Va., is picture-ready, proudly donning her official Miss Rodeo Virginia crown, buckle and

sash. With poise and elegance, she mingles and chats with rodeo visitors, signing autographs and snapping selfies with anyone who asks.

In her role as Miss Rodeo Virginia, Rogers is an ambassador

for the Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association and the Miss Rodeo America Organization. She also works full-time at the University of Virginia as a laboratory specialist assisting cardio-thoracic surgery research.

The Miss Rodeo Virginia program is an organization devoted to helping young women between the ages of 18 and 26 achieve greatness. The winning title holder represents the best Virginia has to offer in the categories of personality, conversational skills, horsemanship, poise and intelligence.

Each Miss Rodeo Virginia is given the opportunity to represent the sport of rodeo and compete at the Miss Rodeo America Pageant in Las Vegas, Nev., for scholarships to support their educational goals. "I'm excited to compete for Miss Rodeo America in December," Rogers says.

Rogers heard about the pageant through word of mouth. "I thought, 'I love to ride horses, and I like people. This could be fun,'" she says with a smile. "But I'm definitely not your typical pageant girl or rodeo queen —

and that's what I love about the Miss Rodeo Virginia program. It opens up opportunities for a different demographic of women."

In her role, Rogers stays busy attending events on weekends and working on fundraising during the week when she's not working her full-time job. "I have no free time," she jokes. "It takes a lot of work and time, but I am committed to generating as much awareness about the rodeo industry as possible — but also to spread the word about the Miss Rodeo Virginia program and inspire other young women to apply next year."

She is invited to attend industry events, rodeos, county fairs and even elementary schools. "I go to the elementary schools and read books to the students. I explain about how a rodeo works and help bring awareness to what it means to be a real cowgirl. It's something different, and the kids

respond to that. Some of them have never even seen a horse in person. By the time I leave, they all want to be a cowgirl or cowboy," she says with a laugh.

Rogers plans to use her platform as Miss Rodeo Virginia to spread a message that is important to her: "Sow the seeds to your growth." She believes that any small act can impact one's future. She wants "every person to know that if they continue to sow the seeds of their efforts with intentions of reaching their goals, no matter the circumstances, they will see growth and find their community," just as she found her community in the rodeo world.

A lover of horses, Rogers has a Spanish mustang named Brio that she calls her "heart horse." Together, Rogers and Brio enjoy trail riding, and have participated in mounted shooting, roping clinics and parades.

When she's not on top of a horse, Rogers loves being outdoors, engaging in community service, reading, tanning hides/leather work, and hanging out with her beagle, Remington, and cat, Binx. ●



PHOTO BY GENE CAMPBELL

► For more information on the Miss Rodeo Virginia program or to invite Autumn Rogers to an event, visit facebook.com/missrodeovirginia, or email missrodeova2024@gmail.com.



PHOTO BY CELESTIAL PHOTOGRAPHY



Downtown Charm Meets Uptown Quality

Fardowners is way up on the list of Crozet's best eateries

by Peggy Hyland, Contributing Columnist

In the heart of downtown Crozet, Va., Fardowners stands out as a unique and inviting eatery. Nestled in an unassuming storefront, it offers a charming view of Crozet's train depot. Stepping inside, I was immediately drawn to its laid-back atmosphere, a perfect setting for a relaxed dining experience. The staff were friendly and helpful. The space is small but not cramped, and several large tables are available for family gatherings. It was the perfect place to catch up with an old friend.

We made a split decision on appetizers. My dining companion is an avid chicken wings fan, so he opted for the regular wings with jerk seasoning. They were perfectly cooked, with a slow heat deriving from the spices.

We also tried the Hippy Wings: breaded slices of portabella mushrooms in the sweet heat sauce that perfectly balanced the honey and raspberry sweetness with some habanero in the finish. They were crunchy and very satisfying.

We couldn't resist the pot stickers, with their crunchy exterior, delicious filling and sweet dipping sauce. It was hard to pick a favorite, but the Hippy Wings edged out the competition by the slightest of margins.

I have been on a fish and chips kick for months, and this one knocked it out of the park. The rockfish was tender and flaky inside its crispy coating. It is also

available as a sandwich. The Fardowners Burger came on a heavenly pretzel roll, and the burger was incredibly juicy. The side was the soup of the day, a country ham and cabbage soup that was a silky sensation.

We wanted to try one of the several vegetarian options, so we chose the Parking Lot, which was also on a pretzel roll with tender grilled onion and tomato with two kinds of cheese. The caramelized onions were truly extraordinary.

For dessert, who can resist a peanut butter brownie? Certainly not me. It was delectable and made in-house. Also house-made was the carrot cake, my all-time favorite. The massive cake slice was light and fluffy.

My return to

Fardowners after a decade was a nostalgic journey. To my delight, the restaurant had not only maintained its high standards but had also possibly improved. The thought of staying in town overnight and returning for a leisurely brunch the next morning was already tempting me. ●



Fardowners Burger



Hippy Wings



Pot stickers



Peanut butter brownie

Fardowners

5773 The Square, Crozet, VA 22932

Phone: 434-823-1300

Website: fardowners.com

Hours: Monday 11:30 a.m.-9 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday 3-9 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.



The Importance of Clean Windows

WHY CLEAN WINDOWS? Not only will regular cleaning and maintenance help keep windows looking great for years to come, but avoiding dirty windows can also help prevent window damage, protect indoor air quality, and maintain your home's energy-efficiency levels. Many homeowners and business owners are looking for ways to conserve energy and save money.

An often overlooked method of conserving energy and money is simply keeping your windows clean. By maximizing natural light and maintaining proper insulation, clean windows play a role in conserving energy and reducing utility costs.

One of the key benefits of clean windows is their ability to create a more comfortable environment. By allowing more natural light to enter a building, clean windows reduce the need for artificial lighting, thereby lowering electricity use, especially during daylight hours. Next, clean windows with proper seals help to insulate a building, preventing heat transfer. In the winter, clean windows can help keep the heat inside, reducing the workload on heating systems.

In the summer, well-insulated windows can help keep the cool air from escaping, decreasing the use of air conditioning. Dirt, dust and grime that accumulate over time can lead to the deterioration of the window material, especially if left unattended. Additionally, by keeping the windows clean, you can prevent potential damage caused by environmental factors such as pollution, mineral deposits, and other substances that may degrade the window material.

Window manufacturers recommend a regular cleaning schedule, typically every 1 to 2 months, as part of preventative maintenance. In high traffic environments like restaurants and retail, a weekly cleaning regime is advised. By adhering to these schedules, homeowners and business owners can take an active role in preserving the quality and longevity of their windows, while reducing energy consumption.

Lona Bryan, Ph.D.

Owner, Fish Window Cleaning — Manassas

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It's True

Meet the Best in Show Winner

by Laura Emery, Staff Writer



The 22nd annual *Cooperative Living* Youth Art Contest Best in Show winner is True, daughter of Peter and Melissa Gleich of Lexington, Va.

For the 2024 contest, kindergarten through fifth grade students were tasked with portraying visual interpretations of the theme, “What I Want to Be When I Grow Up.” The winning entry was

chosen from a wide variety of submissions by young artists in Virginia and Maryland.

True’s winning entry was an artistic depiction of her desire to become a mother when she grows up. Her artwork was a meticulously drawn image of an older version of herself, tenderly holding a sleeping baby over her shoulder.

“Being a mother is an important job because you get to raise your children to know God and to be good people when they grow up,” 12-year-old True explains.

“The judges were very impressed with the emotion conveyed in the image,” says *Cooperative Living* Editor Gregg MacDonald.

When notified that she had won the contest’s top honors, True says she was shocked and excited. “I said, ‘What??’” she says with a giggle.

Staff members of the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives and Old Dominion Electric Cooperative judged the competition, which included different categories by grade.

First place in each category received a \$25 cash prize, while True’s Best in Show work earned her a \$100 prize.

A rising sixth grade homeschooler, True lives with her family on a historic farm served by BARC Electric Cooperative. She spends her days immersed in schoolwork, riding her horse, drawing, or tending to her pet lamb, “Little Debbie.” True says her favorite book to read is the Bible, and that she also enjoys playing the mandolin and gardening.

True created her artwork over several weeks using colored pencils. “I want to be a mother when I grow up because I love babies and taking care of them,” she says. “I had a photo of myself that I had posed for, and I used that as inspiration. I just tried to make myself look older in the drawing.”

Her parents were touched when they learned their daughter’s artwork won. “We’re really honored that she is being recognized,” her mother, Melissa, says. “When



True first said she was going to choose being a mom as her theme, I was thinking something more career-minded would probably win. Because being a [stay-at-home] mother is not always recognized as a noble choice to make. But, ultimately, no matter what your calling, if you love God and glorify him in what you choose to do, all the other things will fall into place. We’re proud of her for following the desires of her heart in choosing what to draw.”

Peter and Melissa describe their daughter as having “a genuinely sweet heart” and say she loves caring for others.

Cooperative Living started the Youth Art Contest in 2003 to encourage youthful creativity and give young artists the opportunity to display their talents to the magazine’s monthly readers, today totaling 1.8 million.

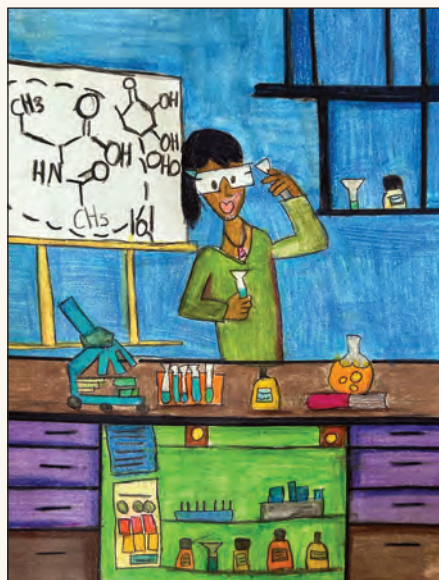
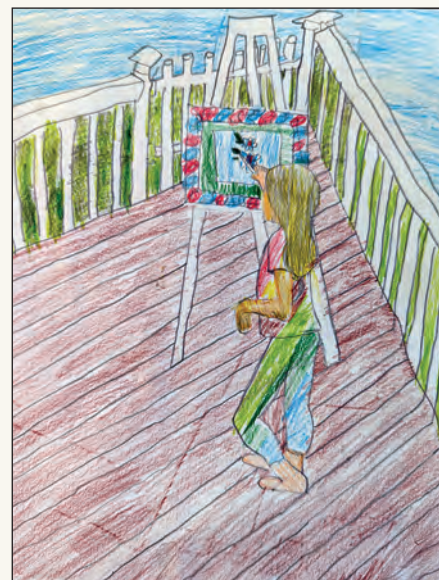
On behalf of the magazine staff, MacDonald says the judges were impressed with the overall imagination and talent in this year’s contest. “There were so many thoughtful submissions depicting popular career choices, such as lawyer, artist, doctor, nurse, scientist and teacher. We also had entries for a zookeeper, barrel racer, preacher and hotel manager.”

MacDonald says, “To all our 2024 Youth Art Contest contestants, thank you for taking the time to share your artistic talent with us!” ●

► To view this year’s *Cooperative Living Youth Art Contest* entries, visit co-opliving.com.



KINDERGARTEN — 2ND GRADE WINNERS:

**1ST** | Aashi Mehta, 2nd grade**2ND** | Shreya Chakraborty, 2nd grade**3RD** | Elyse Frable, 2nd grade

3RD GRADE — 5TH GRADE WINNERS:

**1ST** | Gautham Balraj, 5th grade**2ND** | Naga Prerani Kasula, 5th grade**3RD** | Aarti Golecha, 5th grade

HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Aanya Pai, Aariv Arora, Aarnav Ravikumar, Abi Fogle, Abigail Knight, Abigail Smelley, Adah Washam, Adelyn Hrabak, Akilan Prasanna, Akshara Arvind, Amanda Knight, Ananya Bhatia, Annie Gordon, Ansley Zayatz, Beauregard Cline Snead, Boone Cline Snead, Caleb Hrabak, Carl Shelburne, Caroline Cornwell, Cayden Via, Claire Beall, Clark H. Yap, Cora Mayer, Devlin Kaloustian, Elsie Lamb, Emily Brunk, Emma Quinn Wyckoff, Emma Snead, Esther Carwile, Evelyn Tsepas, Everett Weiss, Hailey Stepien, Hannah Chang, Hawthorne Weiss, Heidi Mayer, Henry Park, Ishita Kishore, James Collins, Jarrett Zimmerman, Jennah Walton, Joanna Schaum, Joshua Hall, Katie Frable, Kayla Lee, Kinsley Sudduth, Lea Zheng, Levin Kollipara, Liya Zhang, Logan Cornwell, Luke Tsepas, Manasvi Somu, Margot Lynch, Maria Glover, Matalyn Hall, Mckenzie Arthur, Molly Torsvik, Neha Kandukuri, Noelle Wagner, Nora Wyckoff, Olivia Chen, Olivia Hrabak, Raeesha Gupta, Rebecca Jones, Rebecca Payne, Reese Cazasta, Riley Bohlmann, Ryder Cline Snead, Saisana Ezhilan, Scarlett Brinks, Sylvie Gresko, Tanishka Kollipara, Tracey Edmonds, Vidhur Sudhan, Vivian Shin, Yvonne Gooch.

Berrylicious!

Baking with blueberries

Blueberry Buckle

recipe courtesy of Janet Hoffman, Madison, Va.

Ingredients:

Sauce:

- ¾ cup milk
- 1 egg
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup shortening
- 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, well drained

Topping:

- ½ cup sugar
- ¾ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup margarine, softened



Directions:

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Grease 9-inch square pan. In blender, combine milk, egg, flour, ¾ cup sugar, baking powder, salt and shortening. Blend 30 seconds or until smooth. Pour into pan. Add blueberries. In a small bowl add all topping ingredients and mix well. Sprinkle over filling. Bake 45-50 minutes or until the filling is set.

Blueberry Crumble

recipe courtesy of Family Features

Ingredients:

- 1 can blueberry pie filling
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 bag (4 oz.) chopped pecans
- 1 stick butter, melted
- ¼ cup oil
- whipped cream, for serving (optional)
- vanilla ice cream, for serving (optional)

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Spread pie filling on bottom of 9-by-11-inch pan. Sprinkle cake mix and pecans on top. Do not mix. Drizzle melted butter and oil on top of cake mix and pecans. Do not mix.
- Lift pan and tilt from side to side until cake mix is completely covered in butter.
- Bake 1 hour until golden brown and bubbly. Serve with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream, if desired.



Lemon Blueberry Trifle

recipe courtesy of Family Features

Ingredients:

Lemon Curd:

- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- ¼ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 6 tablespoons water
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 egg yolks
- ½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, at room temperature, cut into ½-inch cubes

Whipped Cream:

- 2 cups heavy whipping cream, cold
- 2 tablespoons Domino Golden Sugar
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Trifle:

- 1 cup blueberry jam
- 12 oz. fresh blueberries, plus additional for garnish, divided
- 1 lb. poundcake, cubed
- lemon slices, for garnish
- mint, for garnish

Directions:

To make lemon curd: In medium saucepan, stir sugar and cornstarch. Stir in lemon juice, lemon zest, water and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until thickened. Remove from heat and gradually stir in three egg yolks; mix well until combined. Stir in remaining egg yolks. Return to heat and cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Stir in butter; mix until incorporated. Cover with plastic wrap, touching surface of lemon curd to prevent curd forming skin. Refrigerate until completely cool.

To make whipped cream: In large bowl, beat cream, sugar and vanilla until soft peaks form. Do not overbeat.

To make trifle: Mix blueberry jam with fresh blueberries. Place one layer cubed poundcake in bottom of trifle dish. Top with layer of blueberries. Add dollops of lemon curd and whipped cream. Repeat layering ending with whipped cream. Decorate trifle with lemon slices, fresh blueberries and mint. Serves 8-10.

Got a tasty treat to share?

Email your favorite **peach recipes** to cooperativekitchen@co-opliving.com, or mail to Cooperative Kitchen, c/o Cooperative Living, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 and include your email address.

You also can submit them online at co-opliving.com/cooperativekitchen. Selected recipes will be published in future issues of *Cooperative Living* or at co-opliving.com. Because of volume we cannot guarantee publication of all recipes. Reader recipes are submitted in good faith. *Cooperative Living* cannot warrant results.

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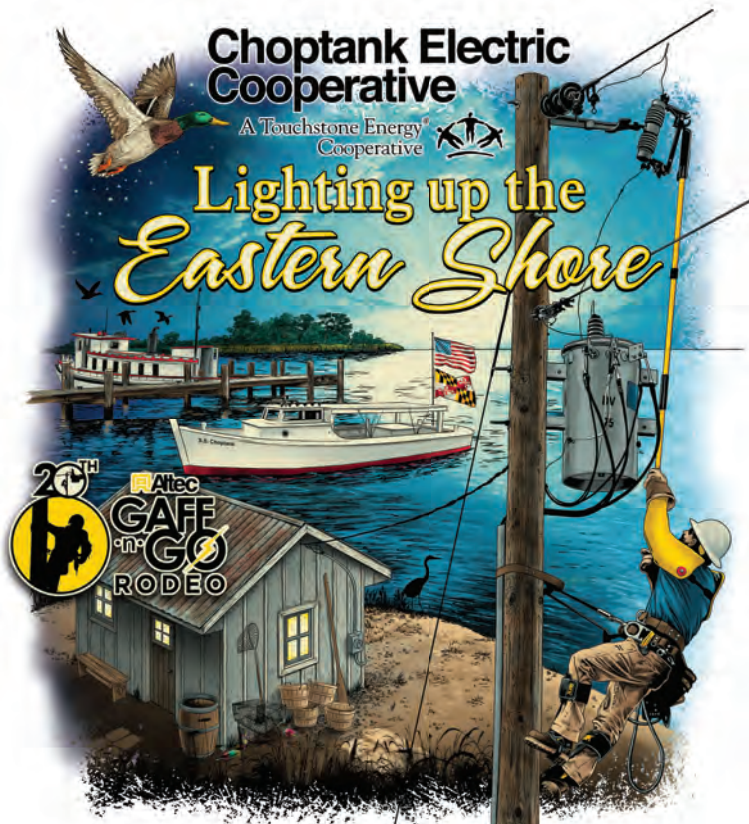
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A Rural Fourth

Fireworks, flamingos and fanfare

by Margo Oxendine, Contributing Columnist



Well, here we are: Ready for America's biggest holiday. It's not Christmas, which is celebrated over

much of the world, but the Fourth of July, where we celebrate America's freedom.

There will no doubt be parades in many towns. We don't have a Fourth of July parade in Bath County, but I really wish we did. There's little that's more heart-stirring than a rousing Independence Day parade, with all that patriotic music.

If I think about it, we did have a celebration on the Fourth years ago. It included a bicycle parade. I love riding a bicycle. It's difficult to do around here because of speeding pickups and log trucks, and gravel off the macadam.

But back when I was still riding my bike around on back roads, I decided, shoot — I'm going to enter the decorated bicycle parade. I even had a theme. And, of course, it included flamingos.

I planned my outfit: hot pink shorts and a flamingo-festooned T-shirt. And, of course, pink shoes. I happened to have a rather large flamingo flag, or I guess you'd call it a windsock. When the wind hit it, the flamingo flew. I attached it to a dowel and flew it from the back of my bike. Then, a savvy friend rigged up a "sound system" to the conveyance, which played Jimmy Buffett's "Margaritaville." It was all quite tropical. I just knew it would be a hit with the crowds.

What I failed to realize until I got myself and my bicycle there was this: It was a kid's parade. I was the only adult, and a rather daft looking one at that. Nonetheless, I didn't want my endeavor to go to waste, so it was decided that I would lead the parade, with all the dozens of cute kids in Uncle Sam hats and such on their red, white and blue-ribboned bikes, riding behind. Of course, I didn't win the prize; that would have been almost scandalous. But I had a great time, nonetheless. And my entry drew several comments from cheering, but head-scratching, onlookers.

While we residents rarely have our own fireworks display on the evening of the Fourth, we do get to enjoy a dazzling display put on by The Homestead for its guests. We locals simply park our vehicles alongside the golf course, get out, walk a little way, or sit on the hood and look up at the fiery sky. It's always breathtaking. And it causes, afterward, what is perhaps the only traffic jam to occur all year in Hot Springs.

This year, I won't be riding any flamingo-festooned bike. I probably won't even be parking along the roadside. I will be worrying at home during the booms of the pyrotechnics. My second, and hopefully last, heart surgery is slated for July 8, the Monday after the holiday, in Charlottesville.

This one, I learned recently from my surgeon, will be no "piece of cake," like the first. This time, there will be a five-inch-long incision made in my throat. Sheesh! Even after it heals or scars over, I will look like I've been in a nasty bar brawl or escaped a murder attempt. Then again, it will surely be yet another tale to tell — should anyone inquire. And I love to tell tales, as you know. ●

To order a copy of Margo's "A Party of One," call 540-468-2147 Mon.-Wed., 9 a.m.-5 p.m., or email therecorderoffice@gmail.com.

[SCENE IT!]

LEXINGTON, VA



PHOTO BY CINDY COX, REC MEMBER



WHEREZ IT?

Look for the CL logo, like the one above, in the pages of this issue of *Cooperative Living*. Submit the page number where you found it, along with your name, email and phone number to **WherezIt**, c/o *Cooperative Living*, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060 or go online at co-opliving.com under "Contests." Deadline is **July 20**. The winner will receive a \$25 Amazon email gift card.

BUSINESS

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ORIGINAL STAR WARS TRILOGY in VHS format in original packaging. Used Star Wars poster from 1980s. Two tubes, approximately 80 posters. Circulated Bicentennial Quarters 1776-1976. Please send your bids for one or more of these items to Resident, P.O. Box 2700, Winchester, VA 22604.

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AUCTIONS

CARWILE AUCTIONS INC.

ESTATE OF JOSEPH KAYE. Phenix, VA. Timed Online Auction. Bidding begins June 28, 6 p.m. Auction Closing Date, Friday, July 12, 6 p.m.

ESTATE OF MARIE THOMAS JR. & THE LATE ROBERT THOMAS. Blackstone, VA. Timed Online Auction. Bidding Begins Friday, July 5, 6 p.m. Auction closing date, Friday, July 19, 6 p.m. Mr. Thomas was an avid collector of horse drawn vehicles and farm equipment, of which many are now displayed at the Robert Thomas Carriage Museum in Blackstone, VA.

www.carwileauctions.com. Facebook & Auction Zip. VAAR392. 434-547-9100.



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RATES: Non-business: \$70 per 25-word block plus \$2.50 per word over 25; OR "Mini" ad – \$5 per word (max. 10 words). Business, agent and broker ads: \$130 per 25-word block, plus \$5 per word over 25. Display Real Estate: \$299 per block.

DEADLINE: July 5 for Aug. issue; Aug. 5 for Sept. issue; Publisher reserves the right to designate classification or reject any ad. No personals, please.

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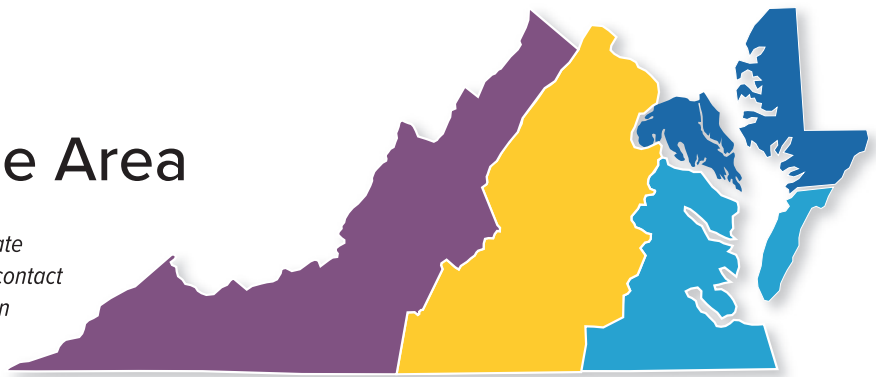
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Events Around the Area

Editor's note: All information is believed to be accurate as of press time. Before you attend, please use the contact information to verify the status of an event. Listing an event does not constitute an endorsement.



BLUE RIDGE WEST

JULY

13-21 HOT SPRINGS. The 59th Annual Bath County Art Show. Bath County High School. Bathcountyarts.org.

19-21 SINGERS GLEN. FredFEST. Ostlund Christmas Tree Farm. Fredfestva.com.

27 SHENANDOAH. Free Music in the Park: Philly Born. Big Gem Park. 540-652-8773. Townofshenandoah.com.

AUGUST

2 SHENANDOAH. Cruz-In on First Street. 6-9 p.m. 540-742-1141. Townofshenandoah.com.

9-11 VERONA. Oak Grove Folk Music Festival. Oak Grove Theater. Times vary. Oakgrovefestival.org.

PIEDMONT

JULY

17 MADISON. Madison County Volunteer Fire Dept. Parade. 6:30 p.m. 540-948-4455. Madisonva.com.

17-20 MADISON. Madison County Fair. 1015 Fairground Rd. 540-948-7073. Madisoncountyfairva.com.

19-20 CLARKSVILLE. 47th Annual Virginia Lake Festival. Clarksvilleva.com.

25-27 MINERAL. Louisa County Fair. Elizabeth Trice Walton Park. Louisacountyfair.com.

27 HUDDLESTON. Ray Judd's Music in the Park: The Friday Night Band. Beach Pavilion – Smith Mountain Lake State Park. 8 p.m. 540-297-6066. Virginiasateparks.gov.

AUGUST

3 MANASSAS. African American Heritage Festival. Metz Middle School. 11 a.m.-6 p.m. 703-369-2475. Maahf.com.

7-11 BRANDY STATION. Brandy Station Vol. Fire Dept. Annual Fair, Parade and Tractor Pull. 20057 Fleetwood Heights Rd. 540-825-0354. Bsvfd.com.

10 STAFFORD. 610 Cruisers Annual Car Show. North Stafford High School. 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. 1billpeil.bp@gmail.com.

TIDEWATER

JULY

18-20 CHINCOTEAGUE. Chincoteague Island Blueberry Festival. The Chincoteague Center. 757-894-2334. Chincoteagueblueberryfestival.com.

19-20, 22-27 CHINCOTEAGUE. 99th Annual Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company Carnival. Chincoteague Carnival Grounds. 7-11 p.m. Chincoteaguechamber.com.

20 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: The Deloreans. Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascap.com.

24 CHINCOTEAGUE. 99th Annual Chincoteague Pony Swim. Veterans Memorial Park. Chincoteaguechamber.com.

25 CHINCOTEAGUE. 99th Annual Pony Auction. Carnival Grounds. 8 a.m. Chincoteaguechamber.com.

27 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Jangling Reinharts. Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascap.com.

AUGUST

3 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Brasswind. Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascap.com.

7 ONANCOCK. Wine Wednesday. Historic Onancock School. 5-7 p.m. 757-302-1331. Historiconancockschool.org.

10 CAPE CHARLES. Concerts in the Park: Morgan Lynsey. Cape Charles Central Park. 7-9 p.m. Citizens4centralpark@gmail.com. Capecharlesvirginiascap.com.

MARYLAND

JULY

2-4 FEDERALSBURG. Eastern Shore Threshermen & Collectors Assoc. Inc. 64th Annual Wheat Threshing, Steam & Gas Engine Show. 10 a.m. each day. 5806 Federalsburg Hwy. 410-673-2414. Threshermen.org.

27 SNOW HILL. Summer Music Series: The Stringbuzzards. Furnace Town Historic Site. 5-8 p.m. Furnacetown.org.

AUGUST

3 SNOW HILL. Blessing of the Combines. Downtown Snow Hill. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Blessingofthecombindes.org.

10 PRESTON. Bethesda United Methodist Church Peach Festival. Preston Fire House. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. 410-673-7538.

PRINT DEADLINES: Aug. 1 for Sept. 15-Oct. 15
Sept. 1 for Oct. 15-Nov. 15

Email: happenings@co-opliving.com

Send to: Happenings, 4201 Dominion Boulevard, Suite 101, Glen Allen, VA 23060

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▶ **Holiday Events Guide**

Publication: Nov. 1, 2024

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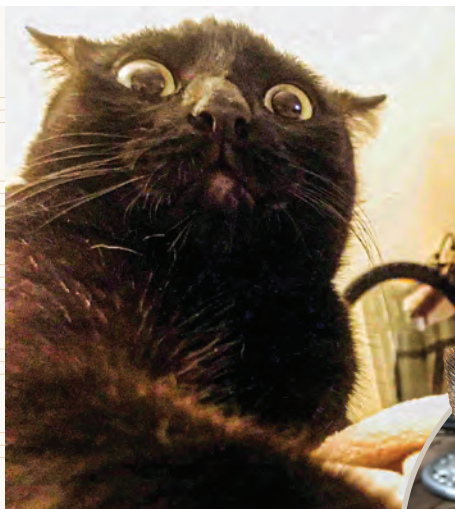
by Laura Emery, Staff Writer

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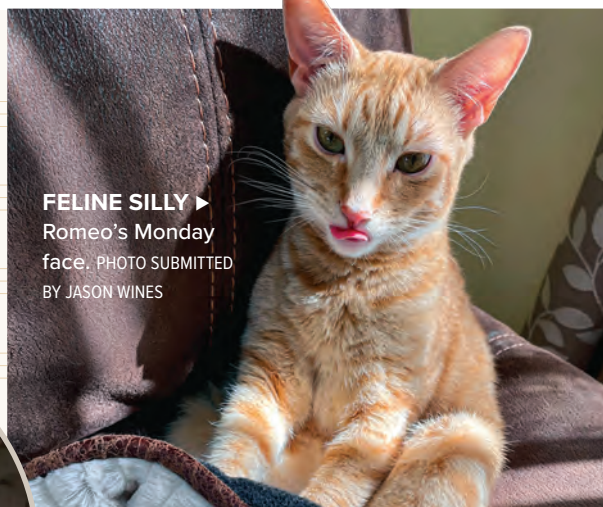
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◀ WHO YOU LOOKIN' AT?!

Paige isn't quite ready for
her own Instagram account.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY LINDSAY TUTTLE



FELINE SILLY ▶
Romeo's Monday
face. PHOTO SUBMITTED
BY JASON WINES

SUN'S OUT, TONGUE'S OUT ▶

Lucy's feeling silly after
getting caught playing in the
mud after her bath.

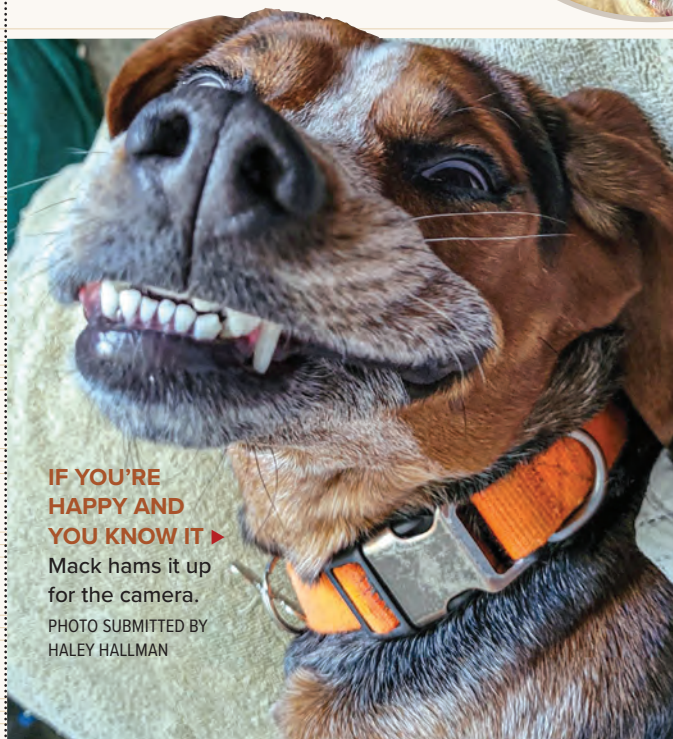
PHOTO SUBMITTED BY SUSAN THORNTON



▼ PAWS-ITIVELY PLAYFUL

Bear shows his crazy side.

PHOTO SUBMITTED BY ERICA BRANNAN



IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT ▶

Mack hams it up
for the camera.

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- ✓ **Close Your Blinds** - By blocking the sun's rays, you prevent heat from entering your home.
- ✓ **Adjust Your Ceiling Fans** - Switch your fans to run counterclockwise during the summer. This creates a cooling downdraft by producing a "wind chill effect."
- ✓ **Install a door sweep** - By sealing the gap between the bottom of your door, it prevents unconditioned air from coming in and conditioned air from escaping from your home.
- ✓ **Keep air ducts clear from obstructions** - Move furniture, drapes and anything else blocking air ducts and cold-air returns. Blocked vents reduce air flow and stress your furnace.

For more cool tips, visit ee.odec.com.

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