




Connection

Communicating local energy news to Four County Electric members

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

inside
Four County
Connection

Capital Credit Refunds Exceed \$2 Million



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Each year, the Four County EMC Board of Directors evaluates the financial condition of your cooperative to determine whether a refund is warranted. In September, the board authorized the retirement of over \$2 million in capital credits for 2021.



Eligible Four County members will receive credits on their December electric bill. The credit represents 100% of each member's share of the remaining margins for 1997, 100% of 2000, and 10% of 2020. Inactive members will receive a check for any eligible capital credit refund.

Each month when you pay for electric service, Four County uses that money to pay expenses. Any money remaining above expenses at the end of each year is credited to patronage or capital accounts. The amount in your capital

credit account is determined by the total amount of the bills you paid during those years.

Member-furnished capital is used mainly to upgrade the electric system, reducing the need to borrow

funds from our bankers. The investment represents the member's equity in the cooperative. Over the years, Four County has made refunds of more than \$50 million to its members.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Fall is the perfect time to prep your home for the upcoming winter chill. One of the best ways you can save energy and stay comfortable is to caulk and weatherstrip areas that typically need sealing. Start by sealing around windows and doors. Seal plumbing, ducting, and areas where electrical wiring comes through walls, floors and ceilings for additional energy savings.

Source: energy.gov

Get the Scoop

Four County EMC offices will be closed Thursday, November 25, and Friday, November 26, in observance of Thanksgiving. We wish you a safe and blessed holiday.

CO-OP CONNECTIONS BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Desmond Jordan HOUSE OF GAINS OWNER

Negative comments should not discourage; rather, they should flame a fire to achieve.” It’s a motto that has served Desmond Jordan well, whether as a competitive athlete, coach, or the owner of House of Gains, a fitness center in downtown Burgaw.



Desmond traveled all over Europe playing professional football, but his roots are firmly planted here. He was born and raised in Rocky Point and has always held a passion for supporting and encouraging the youth of Pender County. “The kids here are special to me because I was them. I grew up here, and I walked the same high school halls. I am them,” Desmond explains.

Always a motivated and determined competitor, Desmond was a born athlete, playing multiple sports in school and excelling at all. He has still-standing records at Heide Trask in football and is a Pender County Sports Hall of Fame member. Desmond went on to play football and baseball at Winston Salem University and graduated with a fitness degree from Pinnacle Career Institute. After college, the American Football League recruited him to play for the Bielawa Owls in Poland. By the end of his first season, Desmond held an undefeated title, a championship win, eight records, and a retired jersey.



When Desmond returned to Pender County, he returned to his alma mater and coached

just about every sport Heide Trask offered. In 2012, he started 32 Fitness, a gym named after his high school jersey number. The name changed in 2019 to House of Gains, but his mission remained the same. Desmond’s goal was to make sure there was a place in Burgaw where youth could get the coaching, training and support needed to succeed in sports. “My ultimate goal,” Desmond says, “is to help kids achieve what I achieved.”

House of Gains, located on Courthouse Avenue in downtown Burgaw, is a small fitness center with a big heart. With membership rates at \$20 per month, Desmond maintains his goal of making fitness accessible to everyone. He currently runs sports-related training programs for kids and one-on-one fitness and sports training for adults. “I keep my rates affordable because I want everyone to be able to join. I try to provide a positive environment and want everyone to feel welcome.”

Being a business owner, husband and father of three children hasn’t stopped Desmond from competing on a high level. He plays rugby, which makes sense for the former pro football player. “It’s football without pads,” he says, laughing, “and I like competing; it doesn’t matter what it is.”

Last year, Desmond picked up another sport – powerlifting. In Desmond’s first competition, he took impressive 2nd and 3rd place finishes. By his third competition, he blew everyone away, taking multiple first-place awards. For his efforts, Desmond has now qualified for the national championship in Atlanta, the North American competition in St. Louis and the world championship held in Australia. “It’s all about my belief in myself. I don’t listen when people say my goals aren’t possible. Work hard and you can do anything - this is what I want the youth in Pender County to know.”

To follow Desmond’s powerlifting journey, check him out on the following social media platforms:

[Facebook.com/thehouseofgains112](https://www.facebook.com/thehouseofgains112)

[Instagram.com/Desmond.Jordan.94](https://www.instagram.com/Desmond.Jordan.94)

[Instagram.com/thehouseofgains112](https://www.instagram.com/thehouseofgains112)

[Tiktok – Desmondjordan32](https://www.tiktok.com/@Desmondjordan32)

[YouTube – Desmond Jordan](https://www.youtube.com/DesmondJordan)

House of Gains is a participating Co-op Connections business. Four County members receive 15% off the already low personal training rate for the first two months!





November is Small Business Month

We support our local communities when we support local businesses! The Co-op Connections Program enables you to save money when shopping locally at participating businesses. Show your Co-op Connections card or use the mobile app at the following local businesses and SAVE!

ONLINE STORES

Art of Eden

910-540-4970 | artofeden.net and etsy.com/shop/GardenArtofEden
15% off your order using code CONNECTIONS15

Coastal Carolina Charm

facebook.com/Coastal-Carolina-Charm-185282752979989/
10% off

Digital Glitch IT Solutions

910-604-6373 | digitalglitch.tech
\$20 off the first hour of service

Lew's Jewelry

lewsjewelry.biz | 15% off

REGIONAL

America's Best Choice Replacement Windows & Doors

910-443-2919 | abcwinwilmington.com
50% of all window accessories and glass upgrades with a 6-window minimum order

Smith & Sons Heating & Cooling

910-862-2622 | smithandsonshvac.com
10% off a service call. Serving all of NC

PENDER COUNTY

Bandana's Family Restaurant & Grille

910-259-3448 | bandanasburgaw.business.site
\$1 off your order with a minimum of \$15

Brown Dog Coffee Co., Burgaw

910-259-3349 | browndogcoffeeco.com
15% off bagged coffee purchased in-store

Carolina Sisters Monograms & Boutique, Burgaw

910-663-5403 | carolinasisters.net
15% off on Tuesdays

Fat Daddy's Pizza, Burgaw

910-300-6350 | fatdaddysburgaw.com
10% off

Gregory Farms & Vineyard, Currie

910-520-1971 | gregoryfarmsandvineyard.com
10% off a cheese and cracker plate or 10% off a wine slushie mix

House of Gains Gym & Physical Fitness Center, Burgaw

336-602-3094 | houseofgains112.wixsite.com/website
15% off one-on-one training for the first two months

Lanier Hardware & Rental, Burgaw

910-259-4825 | lanierhardwareandrental.com
10% off (excluding STIHL and rentals)

MeMa's Chick'n & Ribs, Burgaw

910-300-6139 | memaschicknandribs.com
One free drink with the purchase of an entrée or one free dessert with the purchase of two entrees

Sasi's World, Burgaw

910-300-6297
facebook.com/sasisworld
10% off



Southern Chic's Treasures, Burgaw

910-789-5003 | southernchicstreasures.com
10% off

The County Seat Clothing, Home Décor & More, Burgaw

910-389-3921 | 10% off

The Garden Center at Johnson Nursery, Watha

800-624-8174 | johnson-nursery.com
10% off

The Old Farm Shed, Burgaw

910-465-7868 | theoldfarmshed.com
10% off

Utopia Day Spa, Burgaw

910-300-6281
10% off any chemical service for hair

DUPLIN COUNTY

Art of Hope, Fine Art & Custom Framing, Wallace

910-285-4940 | hopegsmith.com
10% off one in-store item

Billy's Pork & Beef, Wallace

910-285-6047
billysporkandbeef.com
10% off (excludes catering)



Duff's Café, Beulaville

910-298-9121
\$1 off meal purchase

Duplin Winery, Rose Hill & North Myrtle Beach

800-774-9634 | duplinwinery.com
10% off wine, in-store only

Mad Boar Restaurant & Pub, Wallace

910-285-8888 | madboar.com
15% off lunch (11 am - 3 pm)

Muddy Creek on Main Boutique, Beulaville

910-375-8053 | muddycreekonmain.com
10% off

R & S Auto and Truck Repair, Wallace

910-679-7191 | randsautoandtruck.shop
10% off professional body services and paint and 10% off any mechanical service over \$50

The Glass Slipper Boutique, Wallace

910-665-1668 | 10% off on Wednesdays

The Pink Monkee Boutique & Gifts, Beulaville

910-298-6006 | 15% off on Wednesdays

Village Subs, Wallace

910-285-1111 | villagesubsn.com
10% off

Westside Creations, Wallace

910-710-4898 | westsidecreationsnc.com
10% off on Thursdays

BLADEN COUNTY

Cape Fear Vineyard & Winery, Elizabethtown

910-645-4291 | capefearwinery.com
10% off one entrée

Fisher's Women's & Men's Apparel, Elizabethtown

910-862-3718 | fishersapparel.com
15% off regularly priced item

Kinlaw Furniture & Appliances, Elizabethtown

910-862-3325
10% off appliances on Thursdays

Leinwand's Department Store, Elizabethtown

910-862-3772
leinwands.com
15% off retail



Lu Mil Vineyard, Elizabethtown

910-862-5979 | lumilvineyard.com
10% off in gift shop

Ray's Furniture, Jewelry & Framing, Elizabethtown

910-862-2586 | 10% off retail

BOARD SPOTLIGHT:

Clayton Hollingsworth

“It’s all about the members.” That heartfelt sentiment is one frequently expressed by Clayton Hollingsworth, Four County EMC board member. He continues: “It’s not about the board or Four County, because without the faith and support of our members, we could not do what we do.”



to an armor unit as a tank loader and issued him orders for Germany. While there, Clayton’s only child, a daughter, was born.

In 1972, when the Nixon administration started pulling troops out of Vietnam, the Army found itself with too many young soldiers. Clayton, along with thousands of military personnel, received orders to leave Germany. He recalls what it was like at the airport: “I have never seen so many soldiers in an airport at the same time - all leaving!”

Clayton became part of Project Transition, a program aimed at equipping service members with marketable job skills. He was sent to Fayetteville to train as a tire salesman for BF Goodrich. After training, however, he decided to return to the night shift at JP Stevens. During the day, Clayton attended James Sprunt Community College on the GI Bill, earning an associate’s degree in animal science.

Not long after the textile mill closed its doors, Clayton was given a chance to use his degree and went to work for Murphy Farms. For 20 years, he worked as an assistant manager at one of their sow farms. Never afraid to work, Clayton took on a second full-time job in 1991 when he was sworn in as magistrate for Sampson County. When Brenda passed away in 2010, Clayton retired from Murphy Farms but continued as a magistrate for another ten years.

In 2004, while working those two full-time jobs, Clayton joined the Four County Board of

Clayton was born, raised and still lives in a small area of Sampson County known as Newton’s Crossroads, near Harrells. The youngest son of a tobacco farmer, Clayton grew up with two brothers and a sister.

After graduating from Clear Run High School, Clayton went to work at JP Stevens Textile Mill in Wallace. He recalls sitting on the forklift every morning at 10:00 a.m., ostensibly waiting for the gasoline delivery. Clayton laughs and says he was really waiting on two young ladies who walked by the warehouse parking lot many mornings. Clayton admits he was too shy to initiate a conversation, but they stopped in front of him one cold winter morning and took that first step. One of the girls pointed to the other and told him, “See this girl here?”

She wants to know your name!” Clayton offered up his name, and that was the beginning of Clayton and Brenda’s courtship.

Serving Country and Community

The war in Vietnam was at its peak in 1969 when Clayton received his draft letter a week after turning 19. With his older brothers already deployed - one in Germany and the other in Vietnam - the Army initially deferred Clayton’s orders. However, once his brother returned from Germany, it was Clayton’s turn to go.



Clayton left for basic training in November 1970, just a few months after marrying Brenda. He laughs and says that was the first time he’d flown in a plane. “I was just a country boy straight out of the tobacco field.” After boot camp, the Army assigned Clayton



“It takes the first three years to understand how a cooperative works and six to eight years to attain a solid working knowledge of power costs. The board works hard to stay current on the power industry so we can plan where we want the cooperative to be 10-15 years from now.”

Directors, serving out the remainder of his father’s term, who had recently passed. His father, James Hollingsworth, served on the FCEMC board for over 30 years, so Clayton was well aware of the importance and impact of the position. He had watched his father’s interactions with members for years and saw how Four County was there for their members and communities. Clayton says he is honored to continue his father’s legacy on the board. “I want to help. That’s what we all want to do. It’s like a big family!”

Clayton admits there is a lot to learn as a director of an electric cooperative. “It takes the first three years to understand how a cooperative works and six to eight years to attain a solid working knowledge of power costs. The board works hard to stay current on the power industry so we can plan where we want the cooperative to be 10-15 years from now.”

He continues, “Everything we do is for our member-consumers.

Remote kiosks allow for 24/7 cash payments, the AMI meters enable us to offer the pay-as-you-go program, and our mobile app provides our members with easy account management. “None of this could happen without the cooperative’s outstanding leadership and staff.”

Clayton is also very proud of Four County’s programs that benefit the communities – Bright Ideas grants for teachers, youth leadership programs, economic development activities and especially the Round-Up program. Clayton emphasizes, “We help so many members and organizations with this program and get them through some rough times. Round-Up is the best thing since sliced bread!”

In addition to serving on Four County’s Board of Directors, Clayton is an active member of the Disabled American Veterans, Ch. 98 and the American

Legion in Burgaw. He is a former member of the Harrell’s Rescue Squad and their volunteer fire department. In addition, Clayton is a lifelong member of Roseville Missionary Baptist Church located in Newton’s Crossroads.

Clayton is also a lifelong Four County member. He is honored to serve on the board and is proud of the cooperative’s affordable, reliable service. Clayton says he was recently approached at a restaurant by a gentleman who isn’t on Four County’s lines. The man said, “I know who you are, and I have to tell you something. I hear so many good things about Four County. I live on the wrong system, but I can see your lines from my house. I wish I had Four County because my lights would be on all the time!”

Clayton being awarded the NCSHP Colonel’s Certificate of Appreciation after almost 30 years of magistrate service.



Staff Sergeant Darrel Gray, veteran and Four County member



Veteran's Day is November 11

On Thursday, November 11, Americans will honor the millions of active-duty and former service members across the nation. We must never forget their dedication and the sacrifices they make to defend our country and protect our freedoms every day.

Four County EMC salutes and extends our sincere gratitude to those who have served or are currently serving as members of the United States Armed Forces.

Photo Contest Winners Announced

Congratulations to the winners of our first photo contest for the 2022 Four County EMC calendar! Calendars will be available for pick-up at our three offices starting in December.

Thank you to all who submitted their photos. We encourage everyone to start taking pictures now for the 2023 calendar! The call for submissions will begin in April 2022.



Rudy Pait & Bonnie Seashore
Ashleigh & Benjamin Woods*
Lula and Maggie Casteen
Meredith Dowless
Marcia Strickland
Nancy Murray
Nola Croom*
Penny Ross
Eric Kozen

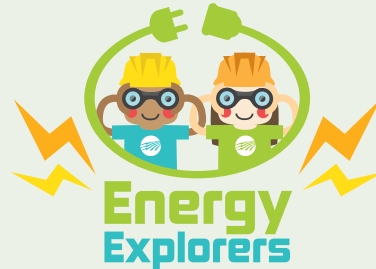
*These members had more than one photo selected for the calendar



COOPERATIVE WORD SEARCH

As a member of an electric cooperative, you're part of something special!

Read the facts below to learn how co-ops are unique, then find and circle the **BOLDED** words in the puzzle.




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

WORD BANK:

- **COOPERATIVES** are local organizations and businesses, so they understand the communities they serve.
- Co-ops don't have customers; instead, they have **MEMBERS**.
- All co-ops are guided by the same set of cooperative **PRINCIPLES**.
- "Concern for **COMMUNITY**" is the seventh cooperative principle.
- Co-ops are led by the members they **SERVE**.
- You're a member of an **ELECTRIC** cooperative, but there are also housing, grocery and other types of co-ops.

Winning **Recipe**
from the editor



Ingredients:

- 1 lb ground beef
- ½ medium yellow onion, diced
- 2 bags (16oz) frozen mixed vegetables
- 1 28 oz. can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup beef broth or stock
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp Italian Seasoning
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce (optional)
- 1 can tomato paste (optional)

In a large dutch oven or pot, over medium-high heat, cook ground beef completely. Drain fat, transfer to another container and set aside. In the same pot, sauté the diced onions until translucent. Use any oil or fat of your choosing. Transfer cooked beef back into the pot. Add frozen vegetables, diced tomatoes, seasonings and beef

Vegetable Soup



broth or stock. Mix and let it come to a boil. Once it's boiling, cover and turn the heat down to low or medium-low setting, stirring occasionally for 30 minutes, or until veggies are soft.

Optional Notes: If you like a thicker soup, mix tomato paste with your broth before pouring into pot. For the Worcestershire Sauce, taste your soup at the end of cooking. If you would like a more beefy flavor, add this ingredient.

Watch 'Cooking with Cam' on our Facebook page to see how this dish is made.

Four County Connection
Janet Smith, Editor

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COOK UP ENERGY SAVINGS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.

- Clean oven burners regularly.
- Match the pan size to the burner you're using.
- Use small appliances like slow cookers and toaster ovens when possible.

From our table to yours, Happy Thanksgiving!

Don't forget to change your clocks!

Daylight Savings Time

SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 7, 2021
Fall Back 1 Hour

Four County Electric

Our Mission

To provide highly reliable electric service, innovative energy solutions and outstanding service to our Members and Communities.

Our Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Trust
- Teamwork
- Commitment
- Excellence

Our Vision

To be an advocate for our Members by:

- Exceeding members' expectations
- Utilizing well trained, motivated employees
- Achieving excellence
- Operating efficiently
- Maintaining hometown values

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative

We believe in the Power of Human Connections

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