

## MEMBER SERVICES

### AUTOMATIC MONTHLY PAYMENT PLAN

Allows your monthly electric bill payment to be automatically deducted from your bank account on the due date. Sign up online ([clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com)) or call your local district office.

### ONLINE ACCOUNT INFORMATION

Visit the Clay Electric website ([clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com)) and access your account information:

- View your bill statement
- Make a one-time payment online
- View current charges
- View account balance
- View billing history
- View estimated meter reading dates
- Request emailed bill statements (Clay eBill)

**PROJECT SHARE** - Help others by designating a tax-deductible amount to be added to your electric bill or make a one-time donation.

**REMOTE METER READING (RMR)** - Enables a co-op meter reader to obtain the meter reading without entering the homeowner's property. The monthly charge is \$3.95.

**ENERGY SMART REBATE PROGRAM** - Offers rebates for members who install additional insulation in their homes, or who install a high efficiency heat pump or solar water heating system.

**SURGEBLASTER** - High quality surge protection equipment at a low monthly lease.

**PAYMENT STATIONS** - Clay has contracted with Fidelity Express to offer payment stations for paying your electric bill at various businesses in the co-op's service area. Fidelity Express charges \$1.50 for each transaction. A list of payment locations is available online ([clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com)) and at your local district office.

Power Line is an informational publication of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. It is distributed monthly with members' billing statements. If you have questions or comments about the Power Line publication, contact Editor Kathy Richardson at P. O. Box 308, Keystone Heights, FL 32656; email: [KRichardson@clayelectric.com](mailto:KRichardson@clayelectric.com).

Clay Electric's website (<http://www.clayelectric.com>) offers online services such as payments, and information about the co-op's programs and services. Members can also write their own ads online to be published on the website's Trading Post. To enter your ad on the Trading Post, you must use your Clay Electric customer number which is printed on your electric bill statement.

Clay Electric's Board of Trustees will meet on October 22 beginning at 12:30 p.m. in Keystone Heights.

## News Notes

### Palatka District's David Compton retires after 42 years of service to co-op

David Compton retired from the cooperative in July with 42 years of service.

Compton served as line crew foreman in the Palatka District since 1997. He began his career as a right-of-way laborer in 1972 before becoming a line-man in 1974.

Jim Beeler, Palatka District manager, said David has been dedicated throughout his years of service.

"David is a hard worker who had total respect from the employees that he supervised," Beeler said. "He was 100 percent committed to Clay Electric's Safety Program, and totally committed to exceeding our members' expectations."



Compton

### Vehicle & equipment auction coming soon

Clay Electric's annual vehicle and equipment auction is an online event held each fall. Look for the dates and more information on our website, [clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com).

The vehicles available are: (3) 45' digger/derricks, one on an International chassis and two on a GMC Top Kick chassis; (2) 55' material handling buckets on an International chassis; (5) F550 Ford cab/chassis; (1) F450 ford w/utility body; (1)c3500 Chevy w/utility body; (1) Chevy Colorado 4x4 extended cab; (1) Chevy 1/2-ton express window van; (1) Chevy 1-ton express window van; (1) Chevy Malibu; and (2) 38' serviceman buckets.

3040-22515

The Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_

# Power Line

October 2013

## Sign up for eBill, enter to win \$100 bill credit

Did you know you can receive your Clay Electric bill statement by email?

If you sign up for eBill this month (or are already receiving your statements by email), you will be entered in a drawing to win a \$100 bill credit.

If you're among the many people who simply glance at the amount due and then throw away the bill statements, inserts and envelope, eBill might be for you. Your bill statement will come as an attachment to the email, and there's a link to view the monthly Power Line bill insert.

The benefits:

- Receive bill sooner than you would through the mail (three days earlier on average)
- Eliminate clutter, save paper and the expense of postage
- View your bill anywhere you receive email: on your computer, tablet or smartphone

It's simple to sign up: visit [clayelectric.com](http://clayelectric.com) and sign into your account. From there, all you have to do is click on Electronic Billing and check the box for "yes." You can also contact your district office at the number printed on your bill statement.

 Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc. \_\_\_\_\_

A Touchstone Energy Cooperative 

## Report from the manager

**Ricky Davis**

General Manager/CEO



### **Reminder: Small rate increase taking effect this month**

With the small rate increase and increase in customer charge taking effect this month, I wanted to take this opportunity to share some additional information concerning our actions.

As we explained in the Kilowatt and in previous issues of the Power Line, due to declining power sales our revenue has fallen to the point where we are concerned for the future financial health of the cooperative. The rate increase took effect this month.

Some of our members expressed frustration about the rate increase because we've been encouraging our members to be energy-efficient and to be wise in their use of electricity, and then we penalize them with higher rates. While our members cutting back on their power usage through the use of more efficient appliances, heat pumps, etc. does lower our power sales a little bit, it has had a very small impact.

The major factors that have impacted our power sales the most in recent years are a decline in new members joining our lines, the sluggish economy, businesses closing and fewer opening up in our service area, high unemployment, and more numerous home foreclosures. We also must address the fact that much of the equipment we use to maintain our distribution system has increased in cost in recent years.

We will continue to encourage our members to use electricity in a wise manner. As an electric cooperative that provides service at cost, we feel that it's our responsibility to encourage our

members to obtain the most benefit from the power they pay for each month. We're not in the business of making a profit at the expense of our members.

As I have mentioned in my previous messages, I have set a course of action that I believe will enable us to continue to provide excellent service and competitively priced power for our members. Here's what we plan to do:

1) As I mentioned, we implemented a small rate increase beginning this month.

2) To lower our expenses, I authorized the layoff of a contract painting crew assigned to painting padmounted transformers and a contract crew handling ground-line pole treating. We're also evaluating our Vegetation Management program for possible savings. We will do a top-to-bottom review of our construction and maintenance programs to ensure proper focus.

3) Our 2014 budget is "bare bones." All major expense proposals are being closely scrutinized during our budgeting process.

4) A five-year building program that addressed a need to replace our aging buildings has been put on hold. Many of you know we opened a new district office in Lake City and our Orange Park district office was renovated to bring it up to code. Plans to build a new central office facility and two new district offices have been put on hold. These types of capital expenditures don't affect our expenses all that much because the money is borrowed and paid back over a long period, but I think it's wise to put these projects on hold.

5) We will continue to evaluate how our resources are used to maximize effectiveness and productivity, but I can assure you we're doing more work today with fewer employees than we had 25 years ago.

We're concerned that our declining power sales and rising expenses will place this cooperative in a difficult financial situation, and

that's why we're taking the steps listed above. We think it's the wise and prudent thing to do.

I would also like to remind our members that for the past few years, we've been offering some of the lowest rates in the state. Even with the rate increase in October, we will still offer the lowest rate among the state's 15 electric co-ops, many municipal utilities and most investor-owned utilities.

We know many of our members are having a tough time, with the sluggish economy, fewer employment opportunities, and rising expenses across the board. But we believe our members also want us to take steps to ensure that Clay Electric can continue to provide excellent service and competitively priced power. As always, we truly do appreciate the support of our members.

### **Our Strategic Plan guides us**

Each year, during the summer, we hold our annual Strategic Planning workshop. At this meeting, we carefully review the state of the co-op and formulate a plan for the coming year.

We also view this time as an opportunity to see how we're doing with this year's goals, and to establish goals for the future. We look at current and future issues which can impact Clay Electric — such as changing energy regulations, a sluggish economy that hinders new member growth, and new technologies that can help us.

The main purpose of this workshop is to keep us focused on two very important objectives: providing competitive rates and ensuring that we maintain our high level of service to our members.

Portions of our Strategic Plan remain the same each year because our core areas — reliable and competitively priced electricity, and excellent service, for example — continue to be emphasized. New emphasis areas are added to our Plan as conditions warrant, such as to address legislative changes, new regulations, new technologies, changing member services, and so forth.

Our employees have been working on writing goals for their specific work areas for next year.