



The newsletter for members of Clay Electric Cooperative, Inc.

# Kilowatt

January 2025

**RODEO**  
*Ready*

## Members can vote, take shot at \$4,800 credit

As a Clay Electric member, you have the power to control who serves you as well as the power to determine your community's energy future.

Trustee meetings have just concluded in districts 1, 8 and 9, and members now have the opportunity to vote for who will represent those districts for at least the next three years. I'm grateful to all the members who attended those meetings.

Notably, District 8 incumbent Jo Ann R. Smith announced during her meeting that she would not seek re-election to the co-op's Board of Trustees. I can't express how grateful I am for Mrs. Smith's years of service to Clay Electric, and on behalf of the other Board trustees and myself, we pray for her continued health and happiness and wish her the absolute best in her future endeavors.

Of the seven guiding principles that Clay Electric considers on a daily basis, now is the perfect time to remind you about democratic member control. Your co-op is suited to meet your needs as it is locally governed and every member — yourself included — gets a voice in how Clay Electric is run. Each voice and vote are equal.

Members who cast a vote in the election, whether it be online or by absentee ballot, are entered into a prize drawing contest to win one of 43 bill credits. The grand prize is a \$4,800 bill credit, and the other prizes include: one \$2,500

bill credit, one \$2,000 bill credit, one \$1,800 bill credit, one \$700 bill credit, one \$400 bill credit and 37 bill credits of \$50.

If you have the free MyClayElectric app, voting could not be easier. Simply log in to your account, click "Vote Now" and follow the instructions. You can also go to **ClayElectric.com** and log in to your account there.

This year, voting opens **Jan. 27**, and that's also the first day members can request an absentee ballot. The last day to request an absentee ballot is **Feb. 28** and voting will officially end **March 11**, the same day we must have received all absentee ballots.

To request an absentee ballot, you'll find a link on the homepage of the Clay Electric website when voting opens. You can also go to **ballot.ClayElectric.com** or email **ballotrequest@ClayElectric.com**.

We'll announce the results shortly thereafter, including the winners of the 43 bill credits. Then, I look forward to seeing you for our Annual Meeting on **March 29** at Keystone Heights Junior/Senior High School.

Something to keep in mind: The Board of Trustees helps set your co-op's long-term priorities, and they live on the co-op lines just like you. They've been elected by people just like you. We depend on you and your valuable perspective, and I encourage you to weigh in on important co-op issues and participate in our elections.



Ricky Davis  
General Manager

### Kilowatt

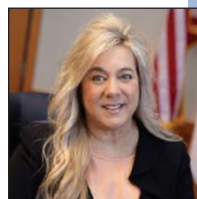
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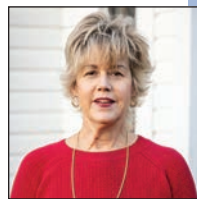
On the cover: Apprentice Lineworker Dalton Hollingsworth scales a pole during a training exercise.

### Meet the candidates



#### Cindy Loose, District 1

Teaches math at Keystone Heights Jr./Sr. High School. Has served as Mathematics Department chairperson, Math Honor Society sponsor, member of the National Honor Society Academic Faculty Council, member of the KHHS Safety Committee and a Curriculum Council Committee member.



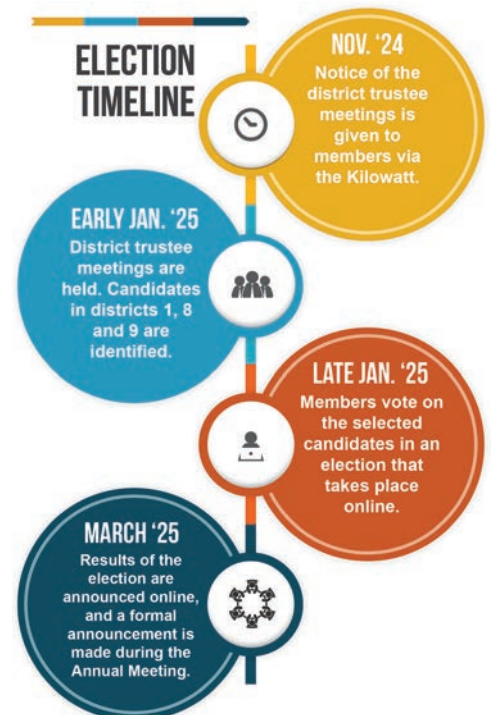
#### Terri Kane, District 8

A Marion County resident and a certified public accountant. She specializes in bookkeeping, payroll tax returns, accounts receivable billing, business consulting, financial audit and accounting, and tax planning and preparation. She has decades of experience in her profession.



#### Karen Hastings, District 9

Has held all Clay Electric Board officer positions and holds NRECA's Director Gold credential certification, the highest level of achievement in NRECA's Director Certificate Programs. Retired realtor and Clay Electric member since 1995.



# Geared up for the state Lineman Competition



Three teams of three journeyman lineworkers (one team not pictured) and six of our apprentice lineworkers, accompanied by their coaches, will travel to Ocala this year to compete in the Florida Lineman Competition.

Each year, teams of our apprentice and journeyman lineworkers spend a weekend traveling somewhere in the state to compete in the Florida Lineman Competition, an event that your co-op takes seriously as it helps our crews perfect their craft when it comes to safely working individually and as a team to restore power.

The competition, also commonly referred to as the rodeo, invites lineworkers — often accompanied by their families — from co-ops and municipalities across the state to demonstrate their abilities, and it emphasizes the need to learn the correct and safe methods of performing power line procedures. We believe that to continue providing safe and reliable power to our members, events like these are vital.

In addition to creating safety awareness, the rodeo helps boost morale and improve working skills among our lineworkers. Like any competition, teams are scored based

on performance, and in this case, safety procedures, work practice, equipment handling, neatness and timely completion of an obstacle are all accounted for when it comes to receiving points.

Any mistake that under normal circumstances could cause serious injury or death results in a disqualification.

Last year, two of our three journeyman lineworker teams took home a total of three trophies, including a top-five overall trophy and a perfect score of 500 points. The lineworkers on those teams will return again this year.

Six volunteer judges from Clay Electric will also travel to the competition, which this year takes place Mar. 1 at the World Equestrian Center in Ocala. Keep an eye on our Facebook and Instagram for photos from the event, and when you see a post, be sure to root on our guys.



During a training exercise, Apprentice Lineworker Dalton Hollingsworth scales a pole for what's called a phase changeout, something he'll be tasked with performing at the rodeo.

## F-150 Lightning: 1 year, 25K miles, \$0 in maintenance

When not in use, Energy Services' Ford F-150 Lightning is parked at Clay Electric Headquarters in Keystone Heights.

It's been a year since your co-op added a BEV (battery electric vehicle) truck to its fleet, specifically a Ford F-150 Lightning Pro with a standard-range battery. During its time in Energy Services, it's clocked an above-average 25,000 miles on the odometer making trips to visit members' homes for energy surveys and other analyses across Clay Electric's 15-county service area.

This review is meant to be enjoyed with a glass-half-full mindset. BEVs are not the same as vehicles that are powered by internal combustion engines, nor are they the same as a hybrid — rather a vehicle that has both an engine and battery that engage part-time to generate propulsion.

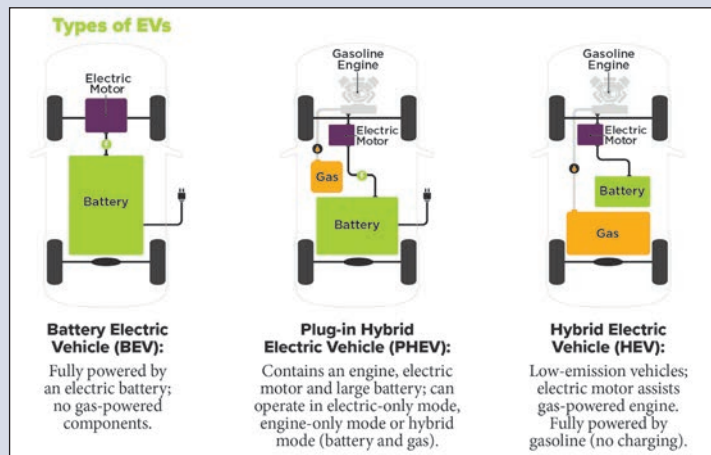
BEVs run entirely on electricity. They are still new, very new. And

inherently, with new technology comes a potential set of flaws or kinks. On the contrary, gasoline engines aren't perfect either and to this date continue to be tweaked and improved.

dealership for a recall, but the issue never saw the light of day.

Remember, when your co-op finds ways to reduce overall operating costs, those savings are ultimately passed on to you, our members, in the form of capital credits. Consider that we're able to charge the truck at headquarters, which equates to a fraction of the cost of filling a pickup with gas. A gas-powered version of the truck would have seen at least two or three oil changes in year one, whereas the Lightning simply doesn't need those.

The decision to put the truck in Energy Services was a strategic one. Almost no one else here clocks as many miles daily as those employees. When it comes to commuting across Clay Electric's expansive service area and hauling



Bearing that in mind, in our first year of ownership, we've reported no mechanical or electrical difficulties in the Lightning's first 25,000 miles. None. It took one trip back to the



Shaughn Henson of Energy Services sits behind the wheel of the F-150 Lightning.



Apart from the "Lightning" badge, it's hard to tell the difference between the EV and its gasoline counterpart.

tools for various jobs at member residences and businesses, the truck foots the bill in many ways.

Becky is a Clay Electric member in Lake City who drives a standard-range F-150 Lightning primarily for daily errands and local trips. It's her first EV. She previously drove a full-size diesel 4X4 SUV and noted a considerable decrease in the costs of operating.

"We've used it to power box fans and other things when we're outdoors doing stuff, or if we're out at the barn or something," Becky said. "And our kids have Onewheels. We charge the Onewheels with the truck."

She pointed out the limitations and said she won't typically use it to tow large items as the range drops considerably. For a long trip, she keeps in mind the estimated range before needing to stop for a charge (approximately 240 miles), which means she's unlikely to take it across the state. A DC fast charger can supply a charge from 15 percent to 80 percent in about 36 minutes.

"But don't get me wrong. We do have a little farm, so I'll go to the Tractor Supply and have them load the back up with feed and drive it home, and that's fine. No issues,"

Becky said. "I think this is a great vehicle for a lot of people, and I'm really enjoying it."

You could say Shaughn Henson, who works in our Energy Services department, has enjoyed being behind the wheel of the truck, too. There's a good chance if he's making a house call, he'll be in the truck, which he drives on average about 170 miles a day.

"Most members don't realize it's electric until I tell them, and some people really want to check it out," Shaughn said.

In the Lightning's first year, your co-op is scratching the surface of how EVs could play a greater role in the fleet down the road. It's the second EV we've added, coming after Member and Public Relations' Chevy Bolt, which is entering its fifth year of service as a commuter for employees.

We're cognizant of EV shortcomings, and at this point at least, there wouldn't be a suitable electric-powered replacement for something like a digger derrick — a truck that is essential for power restoration. But we also see the advantages to EVs, and we're eyes wide open when it comes to new technology. Your co-op always seeks

## SPECIFICATIONS

### 2023 Ford F-150 Lightning

Vehicle class: All-wheel-drive, 5-passenger, 4-door pickup

#### Powertrain

Dual permanent magnet motors

#### Battery

98 kWh lithium-ion

#### Electric range

240 miles (standard range)

#### EPA-rated economy

76MPGe (city) / 61MPGe (highway) / 68MPGe (combined)

to embrace potential opportunities to cut down on spending and maintain a reliable product.

It's safe to say in year one, the Lightning has done its job well and at a fraction of the operating costs of a gas-powered pickup. You can see how the Lightning stacks up for yourself — or any other EV — vs. a gasoline engine by going to [ClayElectric.com/electric-vehicles](https://www.clayelectric.com/electric-vehicles) and clicking on the "Savings Calculator." Many new EVs qualify for a tax credit, and on **page 7**, you'll find all the models that, as of publishing, qualify in 2025.

The Clay Electric Foundation Board of Directors approved

## \$115,500 IN GRANTS

during its December meeting.

### Wheelchairs 4 Kids (Clay County) \$10,000

Nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of children with physical disabilities by providing wheelchairs, home and vehicle modifications and other assistive equipment at no charge. Grant funds will support the Let's Roll program.

### Fellowship of Christian Athletes (All counties) \$14,000

Focuses on serving local communities around the globe by engaging, equipping and empowering coaches and athletes to unite, inspire and change the world through the gospel. Grant funds will provide materials for FCA Campus and Community Huddle group sessions.

### ACORN Dental Clinic (All counties) \$20,000

Provides high-quality, low-cost health and dental care to low-income patients with and without insurance and with little financial resources to pay for their medical needs. The funds will support the Rural Sponsorship Program, which will provide funding for dental care to rural patients.

### Knights of Columbus Holiday Helpers (Clay County) \$10,000

Provides services or products to individuals, families or organizations in need. Grant funds will support the Holiday Helpers program, which will supply toys for children and meet needs of families and seniors during the holidays.

### Bradford County Education Foundation (Bradford County) \$20,000

Exists to improve the quality of education by increasing community involvement and support for the eight Bradford County Public Schools. Grant funds will support literacy improvement and the purchase of classroom book sets.

### Hawthorne Area Resource Center (Alachua County) \$10,000

A collaborative effort between the First United Methodist Hawthorne and the Episcopal Church of the Holy Communion to serve the

most vulnerable population as a food pantry and resource center within Hawthorne and surrounding areas. Funds will be used for food pantry provisions and supplies as well as social services support to families in crisis.

### The Way Free Medical Center (Clay County) \$20,000

Committed to improving access to health care by providing free medical services for uninsured residents of Clay County. Funds will support the expansion of free medical and dental services by providing patients with critical patient care supplies needed for their treatment and wellbeing.

### Mission of the Dirt Road (Clay County) \$10,000

A Wesleyan Missional Community in Keystone Heights that offers meals, community services, recovery and support meetings, and children's programming. Funding from the grant will help the mission in assisting community members obtain legal identification documents.

### Alachua Conservation Trust (Alachua County) \$1,500

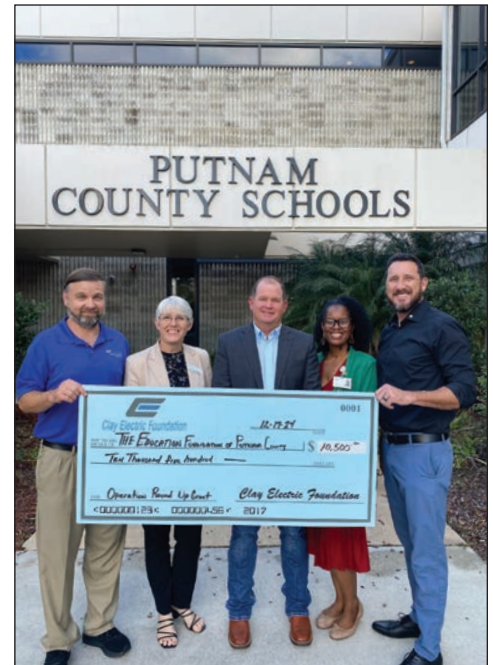
Works to protect the natural, historic, scenic, and recreational resources in and around North Central Florida. Grant funds will support the Creekside Environmental Ed for Kids program.



Mercy Support Services, Inc. previously received a \$10,000 Operation Round Up check.



YMCA of Florida's First Coast Take Stock in Children previously received \$14,000 in funds from Operation Round Up.



The Education Foundation of Putnam County previously received \$10,500 in grant funds.



\$5,000 in grant funds were previously approved for St. Philips Lodge #55.



A total \$15,000 in grant funds were previously approved for Clay Behavioral Health.

# New EVs currently eligible for the \$7,500 tax credit in 2025



The new Chevrolet Silverado EV qualifies for the tax credit, and GM estimates "Max Range" versions of the truck can travel up to 460 miles on a full charge.



Kia's 3-row EV9 luxury SUV, which Car and Driver recently gave a 10/10 score, qualifies for the tax credit. The EPA estimates up to 304 miles for "Long Range" models.

We've compiled a list that, as of publication, includes every electric vehicle in 2025 (and a plug-in hybrid) that qualifies for the federal tax credit of \$7,500. Note, however, that only certain trims — those costing less than \$80,000 MSRP — are eligible.

Several vehicles are newly eligible, while others that were previously eligible are no longer. Keep in mind that additional changes could be in the works.

An important change: No vehicles are eligible for the partial tax credit of \$3,750 that was previously offered, which mostly applied to plug-in hybrids.

## Who qualifies?

The credit is available to individuals and their businesses.

To qualify, you must:

- Buy it for your own use, not for resale
- Use it primarily in the U.S.

In addition, your modified adjusted gross income (AGI) may not exceed:

- \$300,000 for married couples filing jointly
- \$225,000 for heads of households
- \$150,000 for all other filers

## Eligible EVs

- Acura ZDX
- Cadillac Lyriq
- Cadillac Optiq
- Chevrolet Silverado EV
- Chevrolet Blazer EV
- Chevrolet Equinox EV
- Chrysler Pacifica PHEV
- Ford F-150 Lightning
- Genesis GV70 Electrified
- Honda Prologue
- Hyundai Ioniq 5
- Kia EV6
- Kia EV9
- Tesla Cybertruck
- Tesla Model 3
- Tesla Model X
- Tesla Model Y

## Not eligible

- Audi Q5 PHEV
- Chevrolet Bolt EV
- Jeep Grand Cherokee 4xe
- Jeep Wrangler 4xe
- Lincoln Corsair Plug-in Hybrid
- Rivian R1S
- Rivian R1T
- Volkswagen ID.4

Let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger.

James 1:19



### Butterfinger Bonanza

#### Ingredients

##### Crust:

- 2 cups crushed graham crackers
- 1 cup crushed saltines
- 1 stick melted butter
- 2 crushed Butterfingers

##### Topping:

- 1 container Cool Whip
- 3 crushed Butterfingers

##### Directions

1. Mix crust ingredients in small bowl and spread in bottom of 9x13 pan.
2. Mix filling together in bowl and spread over crust.
3. Refrigerate for approximately 1 hour.
4. Top with carton Cool Whip and the 3 crushed Butterfingers.

##### Filling:

- 2 small boxes instant vanilla pudding
- 2 cups milk
- 4 cups softened vanilla ice cream



