

Straight Talk from the CEO

“Blowing Away”

“OH LORD IF YOU HEAR ME
TOUCH ME AND HOLD ME
AND KEEP ME FROM BLOWING AWAY.”

The last verse from “Keep Me From Blowing Away” by the great Bluegrass group the Seldom Scene, written by Paul Charles Craft



Carol Hall Fraley
President/CEO

Every year I start my column with “I love Christmas,” and I do! Truly I love it all: the music, the trees, Christmas with my family, my church, my friends and co-workers. I love to decorate and cook and send Christmas cards and exchange news with those people we don’t see very often. Christmas is a wonderful time, meant to be enjoyed by all.

But over the past few weeks, I have been jolted back into reality. By the time you read this, the LIHEAP program will be up and running, helping those who cannot pay their heating bills. Our church hotline announced that food donations were needed for someone who only has a microwave to make food hot. Since canned and boxed foods were requested, I doubt if there is even a refrigerator. Clubs and organizations are gearing up to prepare and deliver meals, fill food baskets, make sure kids have a warm coat, socks, and something under the Christmas tree. And I am hit squarely between the eyes with the realization that Christmas is not all about fun and food and what we want, or want the kids to have.

Christmas is about giving, just like God gave his son as a very real and personal sacrifice for our sins and the sins of the world.

Do we give? Do we give enough? Right now in our own community, we have people who are hungry. If you don’t believe me, check your local food pantries. Children are excited to have backpacks of food to take home for the weekend. What do they do when they are out of school for weeks at a time?

You know, not all giving is material. If you can’t give money or goods, give of yourself. Go sit with an elderly neighbor. Take a box of Christmas cards and address them and write notes for her. You might even throw in a few stamps. Give children a book and then read it to them. Adopt a homeless animal from a shelter, or volunteer to help at a soup kitchen, library, or safe place for those who have been abused or have nowhere to go.

Do I really need another pair of shoes? Or do I just want them? Can I take the price of one gift or one meal and help someone else? I think I would live through such deprivation, don’t you?

My prayer this Christmas is to be less materialistic and to be more spiritual and giving. I don’t need more gifts, but I can always use more friends, more love (what’s one more puppy when you already have a house full), and more compassion.

Maybe I should buy someone a pair of shoes that really needs them. I wonder how many of these people feel lonely, forgotten, and unloved. One small act of kindness can be a great gift.

Let’s keep these folks from blowing away.

Have a Merry and Blessed Christmas!

–Carol Hall Fraley, President and CEO

One Snowy Christmas Eve 1989 poem

'Twas the night before Christmas and out on the ranch
The pond was froze over and so was the branch.
The snow was piled up belly deep to a mule,
The kids were all home on vacation from school,
And happier young folks you never did see
Just all sprawled around a-watchin' TV.

Then suddenly, sometime around eight o'clock,
There came a surprise that gave them a shock!
The power went off, the TV went dead!
When Grandpa came in from out in the shed,
With an armload of wood, the house was all dark.
"Just what I expected," they heard him remark.
"Them REA wires must be down from the snow.
Seems sorter like times on the ranch long ago."

"I'll hunt up some candles," said Mom. "With their light
And the fireplace, I reckon we'll make out all right."
The teenagers all seemed enveloped in gloom,
Then grandpa came back from a trip to his room,
Uncased his old fiddle and started to play
That old Christmas song about bells on a sleigh.
Mom started to sing, and the first thing they knew
Both Pop and the kids were all singing it, too.
They sang Christmas carols, they sang "Holy Night,"
Their eyes all a-shine in the ruddy firelight.
They played some charades Mom recalled from her youth
And Pop read a message from God's Book of Truth.
They stayed up til midnight, and would you believe,
The youngsters agreed, "Twas a fine Christmas Eve!"

Grandpa arose early, sometime before dawn,
And when the kids awakened, the power was on.
"The REA sure got the line repaired quick,"
Said Grandpa—and no one suspected his trick,
Last night, for the sake of some old fashioned fun,
He had pulled the main switch—the old Son-of-a-gun.

-Author Anonymous



ATTENTION: High School Seniors and Nontraditional students

Be sure to apply for the Grayson RECC Annual Meeting Scholarship. Application deadline to receive scholarships is February 10, 2017. Scholarships can be found at www.graysonrecc.com or picked up from your school guidance counselor or at Grayson RECC. For an emailed application or to have an application mailed to you please contact Julie Lewis at (606) 475-2191 or email julie.lewis@graysonrecc.com.



Use emergency generators with care

Frequent, more severe fall and winter storms over the past few years have led more homeowners to invest in emergency backup generators that can run a couple of appliances or keep the lights on when wind, rain, and falling tree branches knock the electricity out.

Like any electric appliance, it's important to follow the manufacturer's safety instructions that came with your generator so nobody in your family gets hurt while using it. But unlike other appliances, an improperly operated generator can harm or even kill a member of a line crew who's working on a downed wire in your neighborhood.

Here are some generator safety tips:

- **Generators can produce carbon monoxide**, an invisible, odorless, and deadly gas. Never power up a generator indoors. And place carbon-monoxide alarms in the rooms of your house that are near the location where you operate your generator.
- **Never plug your generator into an electrical outlet.** Instead, use extension cords to connect the appliance you want to run directly to the generator.

- **Connecting the generator to your home's electrical circuit REQUIRES a transfer switch.** A transfer switch must be installed by a licensed electrician.



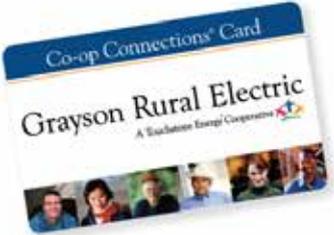
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Tired of fighting the crowds?

You already know that the Co-op Connections Card provides discounts at local and national businesses. But, did you know you can earn cash back for shopping online?

Find out more by clicking on Cash Back Mall at connections.coop.



WWW.CONNECTIONS.COOP

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Looking for a new way to report your outage?

POWER OUTAGE TEXTING

Here are the steps you need to follow to have the ability to text power outages:

1 Call Grayson RECC's office to make sure we have your cell phone number(s) recorded in our system, or you can add it yourself through your online account. This is very important. Simply texting to our phone number will not work. Information is updated nightly and you will not be able to text an outage until the next day.

2 After you have added your cell phone number(s), go to www.graysonrecc.com and register for the service. You will find the sign-up page under the Member Programs tab.

3 You will be given an outage texting number. Add this number to your contacts list on your cell phone so it's ready when an outage occurs.

Now you are ready to text us in the event your power goes out. Please call the office during normal office hours, 7:30-4:30, if you have any questions or comments.

Levelized Billing is designed to keep your electric bill affordable

Levelized Billing is the ideal way to accurately anticipate your monthly electric bills, making budgeting easier than ever before.

Participation is as simple as 1-2-3!

1. You have received service at the same location for a minimum of 12 months. 2. You have paid your account balance in full. 3. Call our office to enroll.

The only requirement to remain on Levelized Billing is that you keep your account current. Your bill will show you the number of kilowatt-hours you use each month, but you'll only pay for the rolling average.

Call Grayson Rural Electric at (606) 474-2120 or (877) 294-4910 to change your account to Levelized Billing.

LAST DAY TO PAY:
December 15

OFFICE CLOSED:
Dec. 23 & 26, Jan. 2

OFFICE HOURS:
7:30 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.
Monday-Friday

CONTACT US:
(606) 474-5136

OUTAGE CONTACT INFORMATION:
Call (800) 562-3532
Text 55050

BILL PAY OPTIONS:
Drive-thru
Mail
Mobile device
Online
Office
Phone

COUNTIES SERVED:
Carter, Elliott, Greenup, Lawrence,
Lewis, and Rowan

OUR MISSION
Grayson Rural Electric Cooperative Corporation exists to provide safe, efficient electricity and related services to our members, our communities, and others who may be affected by our actions and decisions.

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