

Candidates Vying for VEC Board Positions

The following candidates have qualified to run for positions on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative board of directors in districts where the current directors' terms of office is expiring.

Voting ballots for the District 2 and District 8 elections will be mailed August 21. The election in District 6 is not contested.

District 2 – Bradley County

John Buchanan

John Buchanan is running to represent Bradley County on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative board of directors. John has been an insurance agent for Bradley County Farm Bureau for 21 years. He is a member of the Cleveland and Hiwassee Masonic Lodge and attends the First United Methodist Church in Cleveland.



Buchanan

John is married to Ginger, and they have two daughters Maggie and Mary Emily. John graduated from Meigs County High and received a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture from the University of Tennessee Knoxville.

J. David Cross

David Cross is running to represent Bradley County on the Volunteer Energy Cooperative board of directors. David is the pastor of First Baptist Church of Charleston. He is a bi-vocational pastor and owns Electronic Solutions.



Cross

David has served as the Chaplain for the city of Cleveland, on the board of directors for the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, and the Automotive Advisory board for Cleveland High School. He graduated from Ringgold High School and has a bachelor's degree in Theology. David is married to Karen, and they have one daughter Alycia.

Scott Humberd

Scott Humberd is the incumbent board of director representative for Bradley County. Scott graduated from Bradley Central High School. He received a Bachelor of Secondary Education with an emphasis in Biology and a Master of Science in Secondary Education Administration. Scott retired after 42 years as the Chief of Operations and Technology Director for Bradley County Schools.



Humberd

Scott served as the secretary on the board of directors for the Cleveland/Bradley County Teachers Federal Credit Union. He also served on the board of Directors of Farmers Union Mutual Insurance.

Scott and his wife Deborah have three children Jason, Sarah, and Geoffrey. They attend Broadstreet United Methodist Church.

District 6 – Bledsoe & Rhea County

Jerry Henley

Jerry Henley is the incumbent Volunteer Energy Cooperative board of directors' member representing District 6, which includes Bledsoe and Rhea counties. He is a Spring City resident and a graduate of Spring City High School. He attended Tennessee Technological University.



Henley

Jerry is retired from Southeast Bank and Trust and served as mayor of Spring City. He also has served as the president of the Spring City Kiwanis Club and president of the Spring City Chamber of Commerce. Jerry is a member of the Spring City United Methodist Church. He and his wife, Rayna, have two children, Penne Baugh and Jeri Allen.

District 8 – Cumberland County West

Kenneth Carey, Jr.

Kenneth Carey Jr. is a farmer and small-business owner. He graduated from Cumberland County High School, attended Chattanooga State Community College for an associate degree in Fire Science, and the University of Tennessee for a Certified Public Administrator degree.



Carey

Kenneth is married to Lynn Alice and has two children, Kendra Simonds and Andy Carey. He is a member of Bowman Baptist Church. He served for 12 years on the Cumberland County Commission and eight years as the Cumberland County Mayor.

Kenneth is a board member with the Farm Bureau and the Cumberland Farmers Co-op. He is a member of the Crossville Rotary, Crossville Masonic Lodge, and the Alhambra Shriners Club. Kenneth worked with the Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency from 2010-2018, and he volunteers with the Cumberland County Fire Department.

Kenneth has received the Cumberland County Farm Bureau Service Award, Cumberland County Soil Conservation District – Outstanding Conservation Farmer, Cumberland County Fire Department 40 Years of Service award, and the State of Tennessee – Fire Educator of the Year.

Laney Colvard

Laney Colvard is the incumbent VEC board of directors' member representing District 8, which covers west Cumberland County. He is the VEC board of directors' chairman. The Crossville resident graduated from Bledsoe County High School and earned his Bachelor of Science and Law degrees from the University of Tennessee. He and his wife, Charlotte, have one child, Lana and two grandchildren, Kayla and Landon.



Colvard

Laney is a practicing attorney. He served as the Cumberland County Attorney for 10 years, the Crossville City Attorney for 14 years, Crossville Charter Review Committee in 2013, and a charter member of Hilltoppers, Inc. board of directors. He served as a board member of Cumberland Good Samaritan for 15 years. He attends Cumberland Homestead Baptist Church.

VEC and Broadband

I am frequently asked when broadband internet access will become available to VEC members. Similar to electricity in the 1930s, high-speed internet has transformed from a luxury to necessity. The lack of service availability has a financial impact on our communities, but it also creates barriers to education and access to online medicine.

VEC began researching solutions for broadband access in 2015. Opening a discussion with Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative, we researched ways to provide internet service to our members. After a productive conversation with Twin Lakes, VEC initiated a cost of service study.

In the spring of 2017, the Tennessee State Legislature passed the Broadband Accessibility Act (BAA), allowing electric cooperatives to provide commercial broadband internet service. The VEC board of directors approved a pilot in the Hopewell community of Bradley County that initially included 140 homes.

In the fall of 2018, VEC received two grants, one from the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and another from the State of Tennessee BAA. By 2019, VEC began the installation of fiber optics in the Birchwood community of Hamilton and Meigs counties and the Spring Creek community of McMinn County.

To date, VEC has applied on nine different grant opportunities representing 14 VEC communities, including parts of Cumberland County, Meigs County and Roane County. We continue to work with our partners Twin Lakes Telephone Cooperative and Ben Lomand Connect to secure more coverage for the Cumberland County area.

We plan to participate in the Federal Communications Commission Rural Development Opportunity Fund (RDOF) Reverse Auction later this year. If we are successful with the RDOF auction, we will be able to expand in several counties within the VEC service areas.

Currently, we have three grant applications that are pending, and we plan to apply for the BAA grant again in the fall. We are optimistic that the outstanding grant applications (for the Cumberland Cove community of Cumberland and Putnam counties, Ten Mile and South Roane, and South Meigs) will be awarded, allowing expansion of service to those areas.

VEC is dedicated to providing broadband access to members living in unserved areas. We are committed to level the playing field for the rural communities in our service areas by partnering to provide gigabit internet access.


 Roddy Blevins
President/CEO
Volunteer Energy
Cooperative



VEC Customers Share is a grant program funded through the rounding up of member's bills to the nearest dollar. The most an individual member would pay within a year is \$11.88. Our members usually average \$5.50 each yearly.

In return for the rounded up change from our members, we contribute to organizations across our 17 county service area. Each month the VEC Customers Share Board meets and distributes the funds collected in the previous month. A board member represents every service area. In June, VEC Customers Share Grants totaled \$22,000.

Mended Hearts Chapter 127 is one of the organizations receiving a grant this month. Blanche Smith, Mended Hearts 127 president, works with other members to raise funds. They give away 12 AEDs to local nonprofits in Cumberland County.

Mended Hearts Inc. was founded in 1951 by four patients who had recently undergone heart surgery in a Boston hospital in 1950. The two men and two women related their experiences with each other, their new feelings of wellness, their expressed hopes for the future, and the "second chance" in life offered with their newly "mended hearts." They felt a need to "give back" . . . to share their experiences and to give supportive encouragement to other heart patients and their families.

Organizations receiving grants in June

Pickett County High School Baseball	\$2,000	Senior Citizens of Cumberland County	\$1,000
Chattanooga Central High School Alumni Association	\$2,000	Mended Hearts Chapter 127	\$600
Meigs County Ministry	\$1,500	Roane County Youth Leadership	\$600
The Salvation Army of Cleveland, TN	\$1,500	Polk County Youth Football	\$500
Monterey Lions Club, Inc.	\$1,000	Midway Youth Cheerleading Organization	\$500
Creative Compassion, Inc.	\$1,000	Midway Quarterback Club	\$500
Cumberland Homesteads Tower Association	\$1,000	McMinn County Living Heritage Museum	\$500
The Art Guild at Fairfield Glade	\$1,000	Polk County Education Foundation	\$500
Luminary-Frostbite Volunteer Fire Depart., Inc.	\$1,000	Clear View Baptist Church Snack Pack Program	\$500
United Way of McMinn and Meigs Counties	\$1,000	Clear View Ministries	\$500
Rhea County Health Council - Give a Kid a Chance	\$1,000	Covenant Youth Group	\$500
E.K. Baker PTO	\$1,000	Midway High School Baseball Boosters	\$400
		Monterey Depot Historical Society	\$400

Volunteer Energy Announces Scholarship Recipients

Volunteer Energy Cooperative has announced four recipients of the Lillard-Shadow Scholarships for 2020.

Austin Waters, son of William and Barbara Waters, is a 2020 graduate of Alvin C. York Institute and the winner of the Jamestown Service Area Lillard-Shadow Scholarship. He plans to attend Tennessee Tech in Cookeville and will be pursuing a degree in Computer Science. Austin graduated with a 4.0 GPA. Austin was involved with the TN American Legion Boys State, the Fentress County Youth Fair Board, York Institute Interact Club (President), National Honor Society, and Student Council. He participated in multiple community service projects, including collecting items for the troops and making food and toiletry packages for students in need.

Cleveland Service Area Lillard-Shadow scholarship winner **Maggie Thompson**, daughter of Paul and Angela Thompson, is a 2020 graduate of Walker Valley High School. She plans to attend Cleveland State Community College and pursue an accounting or business degree. Maggie graduated with a 4.0 and was ranked 14 in her graduating class. Maggie volunteered at Camp Living Stones, was a bell ringer of the Salvation Army, volunteered to clean and work in the nursery of Bellefont Baptist Church. As a member of the Anchor Club, she visited Brookdale Nursing Home residents and helped as needed.

Cumberland County High School graduate and Crossville Service Area Lillard-Shadow scholarship recipient, **Katelyn Carpenter**, plans to attend Tennessee Tech in Cookeville. Katelyn is the daughter of Alan Carpenter. She graduated with a 3.9 and was ranked 20th in her class. Katelyn will be pursuing a degree in Environmental Engineering with a Soil Science Concentration. She is very involved in her community. Katelyn also participated in the VEC Nursing Home Supply Drive by donating several pairs of slippers and boxed tissues. She worked with her church to provide food care packages weekly to food-insecure children at an elementary school. Volunteering for three years with the Cumberland County Special Olympics, she worked individually with special needs contestants to lead them through activities at their skill levels. Katelyn also joins members of her church monthly to plan, prepare, and serve a meal at Bread of Life Soup Kitchen.

Meigs County High School graduate **John Melhorn** is the Decatur Service Area winner of the Lillard-Shadow Scholarship. The son of

Fred and Tammie Melhorn, John, plans to attend the University of Tennessee Knoxville to pursue a degree in Physics. He was the 2020 Valedictorian and held a 4.0 GPA. John has accumulated over 200 hours of community service. He was an active member of Meigs County's Future Farmers of America while serving the community with yard work, packing food boxes, peer tutoring, Farm Day, handling the concession stand for the Annual Pig Roast. He also volunteered for the summer reading program helping young students learn to read.

This scholarship program began in 2003 as a way to honor Willis A. Shadow and J. W. Lillard, founders of the Meigs County Power Association, which would ultimately become Volunteer Energy Cooperative. Four \$2,000 scholarships are awarded to high school seniors each year by VEC using an independent panel of judges.

Scholarship Winners Reflect Same Devotion to Community Service that Created VEC

When Volunteer Energy Cooperative (VEC) was formed back in 1935, the goal was not only to provide electricity to our area but also to give back. Our founders set rules for the company that we still honor today. In addition to establishing VEC as a not-for-profit, consumer-owned cooperative, VEC was designed to be committed to promoting and contributing to the communities in which we serve.

One way that we honor that commitment to our community is through our Lillard-Shadow Scholarship program. Our scholarship program is different from many other scholarship programs. While academic achievements and the financial needs of our applicants are considered, we place the highest level of importance on the applicant's commitment to community service.

The purpose of the scholarship is to identify those gifted students who have demonstrated their commitment to the community and then help them pursue their educational goals. The long-term goal is to encourage them to return home after their studies and join in the task of building a stronger community. The Lillard-Shadow Scholarship program is one of our youth outreach programs that share this same goal.

In this issue of *Powerlines* we are highlighting our 2020 scholarship winners. The four winners – one from each of our service districts – are outstanding examples of what is right with students these days. But the winners are far from the only impressive applications assessed during our evaluation process. Our independent panel of judges reviewed over 70 applications from students who are not only excelling in the classroom but are making a difference by volunteering hours of their time to help build their communities.

We place the highest level of importance on the applicant's commitment to community service.

VEC PROGRESS REPORT

May 2020

Power Poles Replaced	79
Miles ROW Trimmed	170.74
AMI Meters Read	121,722
Contact Center Calls	11,426
Inbound IVR Calls	39,517

Tennessee Valley Authority

Residential & Outdoor Lighting

Fuel Cost Adjustment
Effective **July 1, 2020**

1.622¢

For the most current FCA information, visit www.vec.org

Volunteer Energy Cooperative is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.



Austin Waters
Alvin C. York Institute



Maggie Thompson
Walker Valley High School



Katelyn Carpenter
Cumberland County High School



John Melhorn
Meigs County High School