



ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC

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DRIVE-THRU
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Your cooperative is committed to the provision of safe, reliable, and reasonably priced electricity and other energy related services while improving the communities we serve.

CO-OP NEWS EDITOR
Kasey Carnley



A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Lyman tree farm grows from family land

BY JOSH P. CROTZER

THE LAND HAS BEEN in John McMakin's family since the 1700s. His father and grandfather grew crops like peaches and soybeans there.

But economics and the changing nature of agribusiness meant these 175 acres just north of Lyman had been sitting idle since the 1980s. McMakin and his wife Julie purchased the land from his grandfather in 1999 and began a new family business, tree farming.

"I had farming in my blood," says McMakin, who had been in landscaping for five years prior. "I met some friends that were in the tree farm industry, and I just loved it. And I was able to keep that original farm together."

Installing a new irrigation system was a critical step in those early days and McMakin remains appreciative of the assistance he received from Broad River Electric Cooperative. The cooperative's staking engineer at the time, Ross Eckley, was also a landscaper.

"I owe him a big favor," recalls McMakin. "He helped me get power down to my pump and he was always very helpful."

Now, the McMakins employ a wireless controlled irrigation system that pumps out approximately 100,000 gallons of water each day to more than 80 varieties of trees. McMakin Farms provides trees to wholesale clients, including the landscape industry, general contractors, developers and retail nurseries. They do not sell directly to retail consumers.

"Right now, with everything becoming more green-centered, shade trees and evergreens have really become important to contractors," explains McMakin. "They help keep homes and businesses cooler in the summer."

To those that are considering new trees on their property, McMakin says it's important to select the right tree for the



JOSH P. CROTZER

Julie and John McMakin met when they were both students at Clemson University. Together they have two children and operate McMakin Farms, growing trees on their 200 acres in Lyman.

place it is being planted.

"For example, we grow several different varieties of mid-sized shade trees," he explains. "If you know the right one to pick, you can put it in a place where it won't encroach on a power line or get into your underground lines."

McMakin also offers guidance to anyone interested in working in the landscaping or tree farming industry. He says he sometimes speaks to students visiting from Spartanburg Community College.

"You get into this because you love it," McMakin advises. "There are a lot of easier things to do, but it's rewarding if you feel it."

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Walt McDaniel

NUMBER OF YEARS ON THE JOB: 14

HOW HE STARTED: Maintenance and repair mechanic.

WHERE HE IS NOW: The “Repairer of Everything.” McDaniel is often called to build miscellaneous office equipment, assorted signs, figure out how to work operating equipment, open HVAC vents, sand blast parts and blow sand out of the drive-thru.

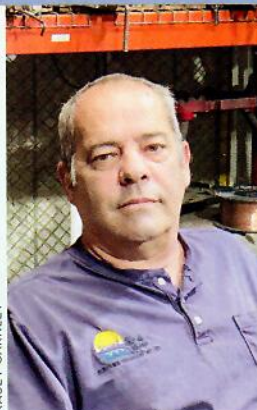
JOB DESCRIPTION: McDaniel, technically, is a department of his own but don't let that fool you. He does repair all the trucks, including engines, mechanical and hydraulic parts and the tires. But McDaniel also is known to go out with teams in operations and act as a groundsman, helping the lineman up top with anything that is needed. A groundsman is also, at times, the designated observer, who watches to see everything is done safely. McDaniel is known as the adaptable everyman, a team player and one who can be counted on to get people to laugh.

HOW HE GOT HIS

START: “I was a maintenance and repairman for a vendor, General Maintenance and Repair, so I knew all the equipment that was here at Broad River Electric. I was already repairing them. But a position came open at Broad River, so I began working at the hydro plant in Blacksburg. When that closed, I moved in at the shop we have now.”

MOST DIFFICULT THING IN HIS JOB: “Working with technology. I'd rather be out working with my hands. I know we have to use computers, but I just don't understand them as well as I do a truck engine.”

ADVICE TO THE NEXT GENERATION: “Take care of the equipment you are assigned or work with.”



KASEY CARNLEY

Annual Meeting scholarship drawing returns

THIS ANNUAL MEETING will mark the return of a \$1,000 scholarship to be given away to a child or grandchild of a Broad River Electric member.

The winning entrant must currently be enrolled in the 12th grade and scheduled to graduate high school in 2022. The funds awarded will be paid directly to the Registrar's office of his or her accredited institution of higher education for the Fall 2022 semester.

Annual Meeting schedule:

April 26 and 27
7 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Early registration and voting at Gaffney office.

Thursday, April 28
8 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Member voting and registration at BREC truck shed.

6 p.m.

Business meeting
(Streamed live on Facebook)

After business meeting:

Prize drawings:

- ▶ Two Gravely Zero Turn Mowers
- ▶ 2014 Ford F-150

Hey honey, what's cooking?

You'll be able to answer that question after you sign up for our tastiest time-saving product—e-bills.

When you sign up, you'll receive a Lodge 10-inch cast iron pan at no cost to you. Made in the U.S.A., this cast iron skillet comes seasoned and ready to use.

Sign-ups will begin during the 2022 Annual Meeting. E-bills are safe, convenient and can save you time—there's no guessing about when you'll receive your energy bill or waiting around for your bill to get to your mailbox. With all the time you'll save, you can really get cooking!



BREC Director Dewitt "Spike" McCraw (left) and Vice President of Economic Development Jeff Humphries accepted the President's Safety Award on BREC's behalf.

KASEY CARNLEY

BREC receives safety award

AT BROAD RIVER ELECTRIC Cooperative, safety is job No. 1. BREC has once again been given the President's Safety Award from our cooperative insurance company, Federated Rural Electric Insurance. The award was presented at the monthly staff Safety meeting on March 10.

To date, BREC has surpassed 145,000 hours with no lost time due to accidents. The President's award is given each year to cooperatives that have demonstrated exceptional attention to the prevention of accidents by protecting themselves, fellow employees and members.