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**SANTEE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE NEWS**  
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

## Shop with a lineman



**IT'S BEEN A WHILE!** I hope everyone had a happy Thanksgiving and a merry Christmas, and I also hope your 2021 is kicking off to be a happy year for you!

2020 will be remembered for a lot of things, some positive, and some not so positive.

Today, I want to talk to you about a way your cooperative—through flexibility and innovation—was able to find a silver lining in a dark cloud.

In normal years, December is when the best high school football players in South Carolina face off against each other in the Touchstone Energy Bowl (also known as The North/South All-Star Football Game). While the football is wonderful, to me, the best part of this event is the day when the players team up with local needy kids to help them buy Christmas presents for themselves and their family members.

Because of COVID-19, that game and all its associated activities were canceled for 2020. This was a disappointment to Santee Electric almost as much as it was to high school football players and coaches around our state. While we could not replace the game, we were able to keep one aspect alive for this



MARY GRACE MCGEE

**Devonte Washington and lineman Dustin Shady had a fantastic time shopping at Walmart together.**

year—the shopping experience with wonderful children!

When we did this in 2019, I had a chance to speak with the manager of the Target in Myrtle Beach, where the event normally takes place. He told me about their “Shop with a Cop” program that served two great purposes—serving underprivileged kids and letting our young folks know that law enforcement is here to help.

I immediately thought about a “shopping with a lineman” experience. After all, what our electrical linemen do is pretty mysterious to most folks, who naturally steer clear of electricity. The cancellation of the 2020 Touchstone Energy Bowl was a great opportunity to start up this program. I was thrilled to learn that many of South Carolina’s electric cooperatives decided on a similar initiative this year.

Normally, we think of our linemen when they are working all night restoring power after a major storm, so it is a nice change of perspective to witness them helping a child buy Christmas presents. I hope you will enjoy the touching images we have shared in this month’s issue.



MARY GRACE MCGEE

**Lineman Jason Floyd helps Amarion Watts choose a game card on the Shop with the Co-op shopping spree.**

**ROBERT G. ARDIS III**  
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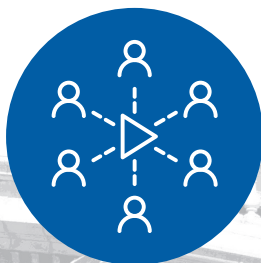
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