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**SANTEE ELECTRIC
COOPERATIVE NEWS**
Mary Grace McGee, *Editor*
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A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative

Dispatch is always here for you



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, we are past due for another employee spotlight column! This month, we feature Annie Jones, one of our dispatchers.

Annie's official title is distribution engineering specialist—Dispatch, and she has been in this role since she started with us in May 2018. Prior to that, she was a dispatcher for the Georgetown County Sheriff's Office for six years. If you have called SEC after hours, or if you have had a crew or serviceman dispatched to your house, there's a good chance Annie helped you out!

Annie was born in Kingstree, raised in Andrews and lives in Andrews now. She went to Andrews High School, and her two sons, Aaron and Damian, play football for the Yellow Jackets. Annie and her husband, Rigo, have been together 18 years.

I asked Annie about the best part of her job, and she was quick to reply, "Making the member-owners happy is the best part!" Of course, I also asked her about the toughest part of her role, and her response was, "the shift work." SEC has in-person dispatch 24 hours a day, so our dispatchers have a rotating (swing-shift) schedule. Any of you who have experience with such a schedule know that it is tough on a body!

I then asked Annie what she likes best about Santee Electric as a whole. To this, she responded, "I really like the family environment. I feel like everyone here has my back."

I asked Annie what she does with her time when she is not working or watching the Yellow Jackets play football. She informed me that she is active in her church (The River Pentecostal Holiness Church, near Andrews). There, she is



MARY GRACE MCGEE

Annie Jones, distribution engineering specialist—Dispatch.

the Youth Director. She loves kids, and she refers to the church youth as her "River babies!"

She also informed me that she loves to cook for people and that her specialty is lasagna soup. I have never tried that before, but my mouth is watering just thinking about it!

As always, I wrapped by asking Annie to let our readers know a little something about the job and the cooperative that most people would not automatically know. "Everyone works diligently to get your lights back on quickly and safely every time," she said. "Twenty-four seven, we are always here."

Annie has a wonderful personality, and she is a true asset to your cooperative. We are very fortunate to have her in this position on our team. I hope you all have a wonderful month!

ROBERT G. ARDIS III
President and Chief Executive Officer

WIRE volunteers send 'pick-me-up' to seniors

THEY MOVED EFFICIENTLY around the length of the banquet tables. Plucking a toothbrush, then a hairbrush, then some soap and dropping the items into a nylon cinching bag. The drop-off point was a trailer that was quickly stacked to near capacity as the assembly crew repeatedly made their circles.

It was an admirable effort that produced more than 600 bags of hygiene items for seniors across the state in less than an hour.

Mary Wheeler and Heather McClary



of Santee Electric Cooperative were among 18 volunteers from across South Carolina participating in the bag-filling project at Mid-Carolina Electric's training center and community room in Lexington on March 22. The volunteers are members of WIRE (Women Involved in Rural Electrification), a community outreach organization affiliated with electric co-ops around the state.

"This was a kind of a pick-me-up project for seniors," says Peggy Dantzer, state coordinator for WIRE. "The pandemic has hit our older citizens the hardest, especially those in long-term care facilities in rural communities."

WIRE works with the South Carolina Department on Aging to address the needs of seniors. The agency also distributes the donations to the facilities. Because visitation had been practically eliminated, WIRE

◀ **WIRE volunteers from Santee Electric Mary Wheeler (left) and Heather McClary fill a bag with hygiene items for seniors in long term care facilities.**



PHOTOS BY JOSH P. CROTZER

volunteers were unable make their usual visit with Santa to one of the facilities.

"We just wanted them to know that they are not forgotten," says McClary, SEC's fleet specialist.

The supplies are purchased with funds raised by WIRE chapters at community events and their South Carolina WIRE dues. On a local level, SEC WIRE has recently had a stuff drive to benefit Pee Dee Thrift. The group is also collecting feminine products to supply area middle school nurses for their on-going "Monthlies Project." Donations of gifts or money will also be made to foster children and Camp Happy Days.

If you are interested in joining WIRE, contact Santee Electric's chapter coordinator Mary Grace McGee at mmcgee@santee.org or (843) 355-0599.

Join the movement to save; you could win \$500

The movement is growing and it's helping to keep power costs from doing the same.

More than 50,000 electric cooperative members across South Carolina have signed up to receive phone, email or text notifications that remind them to reduce their electricity use during peak periods. That number will continue to rise thanks in part to this spring's prize drawings.

Santee Electric Cooperative members who register for the Beat The Peak notification program by June 30 will be eligible to win a \$500 Visa gift card in a statewide prize drawing. In addition, one Santee Electric Cooperative member will win a \$100 gift card from a local prize drawing. If you are already participating in Beat The Peak, it is not necessary to register again to be eligible for the prizes.

Members that register receive an alert that shows the projected time of a system-wide energy peak, typically occurring in the late afternoon of high temperature days or the waking hours of cold



mornings. By voluntarily delaying the use of large appliances, adjusting your thermostat, or just turning off lights during that peak time, you'll be helping to lower wholesale power costs.

In combination with other demand control efforts like Santee Electric's Smart Thermostat program, electric cooperatives have saved nearly \$580,000 in annual power costs.

"The cost of wholesale power makes up approximately two-thirds of what our members pay for electricity," explains Jay Kirby, SEC vice president of Public Affairs. "By reducing the peak demand, we're making a significant impact on our power bill and passing those savings on to our members."

If you'd like to join the movement, you can sign up at BeatThePeak.com by completing a simple form and indicating how you want to receive peak alerts.

Santee Electric member Shanera Cooper is equipped to help reduce wholesale power costs when she gets a Beat the Peak alert. She can control her ecobee smart thermostat with her phone or an Alexa-enabled device. Santee Electric offers discounted ecobees and free installation to its members.