

WATT'S UP



SUWANNEE VALLEY ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE EMPLOYEE AND RETIREE NEWSLETTER | SPRING 2021



FROM THE CEO
Thank you
for your
resilience

A new year has begun and as we move forward, we reflect on the past year and what it meant for our cooperative. Navigating the unknown territory of COVID-19 wasn't easy. But despite the challenges, our cooperative spirit thrived.

We showed cooperation among cooperatives by providing mutual aid to five sister co-ops after hurricanes Sally, Delta and Zeta. Our trustees appointed Cynthia Boyette to represent District 8 as the second woman to ever serve on the board. We expanded upon our commitment to local youth by dedicating an 11th scholarship to a deserving student at Florida Sheriffs Boys Ranch.

Amid a global pandemic, we raised over \$14,600 for United Way, saved up to 174 lives through blood donations and made sponsorships benefitting 54 community organizations. We found new ways to stay connected, like our drive-thru annual meeting that was attended by more than 1,000 members. Additionally, we had zero doctor-treated injuries for only the

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SMORE

- SAFETY
- MEMBER EXPERIENCE
- OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY
- RELIABILITY
- ECONOMIC VIABILITY

SAFETY

2020 Recap

- Days without doctor treated injury: 365
- 976,637 miles driven with zero accidents – about 39 times around the world

2021 Safety Improvement Plan

S		Slips, trips and falls (eliminate)
V		Value coworkers' safety
E		Even the little things matter
C		Continue to improve liability claims

Congratulations for 421 consecutive days without a lost-time injury!

Continued on next page

Don't Text and Drive Campaign

SVEC dropped off the newly updated "don't text and drive" trailer at Hamilton County High School in January. Students were encouraged to take photos with the sign as part of a pledge to drive distraction free, and participants were entered to win \$25 gift cards. The trailer will visit all the high schools in our service territory as part of a campaign to bring awareness to distracted driving.



MEMBER EXPERIENCE

2020 Recap

- Average customer service rating: 4.7 out of 5
- 236,180 electronic bill payments made
- 8,633 drive-thru kiosk payments made

It's time to review your customer journey

by John Formica

As we begin a New Year, I always recommend that my coaching clients review their customer journey. Think of the customer journey as a roadmap detailing how a customer becomes aware of your business, interacts with products or services, and beyond. Instead of looking at just a part of a customer's transaction, the customer journey maps out the full process for each customer interaction with your business, product, services and staff. Without keeping the customer in mind each step of the way, your business could be missing out on opportunities to improve customer satisfaction.

Getting to know the customer journey is about getting inside your customers' mindset and nurturing their experience. To do so, you will need to create a map, or timeline, showing every stage of a customer's interactions. These stages, called customer touchpoints, are identified as any time a customer comes in contact with your business. Identifying touchpoints is the first step toward creating a customer journey map and making sure your customers are happy every step of the way. Ask your staff to get involved and help put the map together. You can get as specific as you would like.

After mapping out the touchpoints in the customer journey, step back and see how they all fit together. Knowing your touchpoints is only half the battle. To improve customer satisfaction, you need to make sure each touchpoint leads to a good customer experience and that the whole journey delivers or exceeds your customers' expectations.

Once you establish this map of the customer journey, you will be able to evaluate the experience and make improvements where necessary. Ask yourself: Are there any obstacles

that customers might experience along the way? Are any touchpoints missing or underserved? Is it clear for the customer to resolve potential issues in the transaction? Always put the customer's needs first. Finding ways to smooth out transaction touch points entirely with the customer in mind will improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

If any of your touchpoints are unclear, survey your customers to find out how they came across your business, how they felt during and after the transaction and what could be improved. Take the time to understand your customer journey and go through the process of documenting every time customers interact with your business. This exercise will help you see where your business can make improvements and reveal how to make every customer experience in 2021 a magical one.

OUTREACH TO COMMUNITY

2020 Recap

- \$14,902 in sponsorship money given to local community groups and events
- \$11,000 in college scholarships awarded to high school students
- \$14,683 donated to United Way, \$5,569 of which was donated through employee payroll deductions
- First ever drive-thru annual meeting, with 1,026 members in attendance

Christmas Parade

SVEC's participation in local Christmas parades continues. This year's theme of "Christmas Around the World" featured a teddy-bear lineman circling the globe in a co-op bucket truck. The float made an appearance at the Branford and Live Oak parades, and the Suwannee County Chamber awarded SVEC "best commercial float." Big thanks to Daniel Warren, Ross Wood, Raymond Poole, Kathy Hals and all other employees who worked together to bring this vision to life!



Christmas Toy Drive

SVEC employees and consumer-members joined forces to purchase new toys for disadvantaged children in our area. The donations were delivered to the Salvation Army of Suwannee County and were distributed to families by Melody Church at their first annual Christmas Park.



Christmas Card Contest

SVEC's 2020 Christmas cards featured artwork submitted by fifth graders from Branford Elementary, Hamilton County Elementary, Lafayette Elementary and Suwannee Riverside Elementary schools. SVEC presented a large gift bag of art supplies to the four winners of the card design contest, and each of their teachers received \$100 for classroom art supplies.



Jayden Williams | Ms. Jessup



Anistyn Bass | Ms. Sullivan & Ms. Pine



Danna Gomez | Ms. Howell (not pictured)



Emily Eakins | Ms. Sumner

Arbor Day

SVEC gave away over 200 Sycamore and Live Oak trees to consumer-members in celebration of Florida's Arbor day. Special thanks to Nobles Greenhouse and Nursery for their assistance with the trees.

Blood Drive

In 2020, SVEC donated 58 units of blood through the LifeSouth bloodmobile, saving up to 174 lives. We would like to thank Christine Moor, Paige Peacock, Mike Guillery, Crystal Ecker, Cathy Erixton, Annette Bonds, Mark Mosley, Maria Suarez and Mike McWaters for their donations this January. Since March of 2004, SVEC has donated 691 units, saving up to 2,073 lives.



RELIABILITY

2020 Recap

- SAIDI: 197 minutes
- Service availability of 99.96%
- 502 ROW tickets worked by Service Department
- 1,160 arrestors added or relocated
- 4,210 equipment inspections
- 530 poles replaced

ECONOMIC VIABILITY

2020 Recap

- Revenues were lower than budgeted, and expenses were also lower than budgeted.
- All targets in the board-approved financial management plan were met.
- \$1.3 million in capital credits were returned to consumer-members.
- Average daily residential electric bill was \$4.52, less than the \$4.95 price of a Starbucks grande pumpkin spice latte.

401k Summary

Plan Statistics			
	12/31/2019	12/31/2020	Plan Trend
Total Plan Assets	\$14,510,853	\$16,996,807	▲ 17%
Total Outstanding Loan Balances	\$281,017	\$155,389	▼ 45%
Participant Contributions			
Participant	\$651,649	\$717,709	▲ 10%
Rollover	\$37,741	\$34,117	▼ 10%
Employer Contributions			
Match	\$268,552	\$319,524	▲ 19%
Distributions			
Withdrawals	(\$504,132)	(\$237,052)	▼ 53%
Terminations	(\$528,046)	(\$484,815)	▼ 8%
Loans	(\$103,200)	(\$40,000)	▼ 61%
Expenses*	(\$2,316)	(\$1,533)	▼ 34%
Investment Income	\$2,648,585	\$2,153,102	▼ 19%

SVEC Employees Support ACRE



ACRE is a political action committee that supports candidates in the U.S. House and Senate who will speak for and protect the interests of electric cooperatives and their consumer-members. Being an ACRE member helps support the fight to protect our co-op's employee benefits, service to members and economic viability. If you are interested in becoming an ACRE member, contact De Smith. [Click here to watch video.](#)

ADMIN/CYBERSAFETY

2020 Recap

- Phish Prone percentage: 0.81%
- Phish Alert reports: 1,125
- 220 nonsimulated emails
- 905 simulated emails
- IT Help Desk tickets submitted: 825

KnowBe4 security tips for disinformation campaigns

Have you ever seen an article with a dramatic title, but the article content was completely unrelated? This is called “clickbait,” and it is a common example of how cybercriminals take advantage of large-scale media platforms to distribute disinformation campaigns that confuse and mislead audiences.



Let's take a look at different types of disinformation campaigns to watch out for:

- Fabricated Content: Content that is completely untrue.
- Manipulated Content: Content, imagery or videos that have been edited or distorted.
- Imposter Content: Content that pretends to be from a reliable source.
- Misleading Content: Content that presents information in a misleading way.
- False Context by Connection: Content that contains both facts and untrue information.
- Satire and Parody: Humorous stories that exaggerate facts and may be used to fool readers.

Now, let's look at some methods you can use to combat disinformation:

- Consider the source
- Always consider the reliability of the source and author of the content you are viewing. Ask yourself: What is this author or source known for? Where was the information retrieved from? Credible news sources typically cite where their information came from, and their cited sources are credible, as well.
- Fact-check and educate
- You can also combat disinformation by fact-checking information that you see and by educating yourself on the subject. You can use fact-checking sites such as FactCheck.org, PolitiFact.com or Snopes.com to check the validity of content that you find.
- Stop, Look, Think - Don't be fooled.

FROM OUR EAP

Reach your financial goals

Whether you're saving for retirement or your children's college, thinking of buying a new home or just trying to get a new car, reaching big financial goals can be tough. Your EAP can help in several ways. Access a broad array of financial programs to help you gain



control and improve your financial picture. Also, tap into the many free, money saving benefits for you and your family members, enabling you to stretch your dollars.

Here's just some of what your EAP has to offer:

- Certified financial coaching: Get help with budgeting, credit, debt, savings and money management through telephonic coaching provided by certified professionals.
- Personal finance and investing courses: Take charge of your finances at your own pace with hundreds of online finance courses. Access financial assessments and test financial scenarios with 167 calculators in the financial section of your EAP website.
- Budgeting and consumer tools: Tools for Tough Times offers resources to help you do more with less.
- Lifestyle savings benefits: Explore thousands of discounts, rewards and perks in a variety of categories from your favorite brands.

Explore these and other free tools and benefits online 24/7 by logging in at www.theEAP.com, or call us if you need help!

FAREWELL ...

The end of the year marked the start of new journeys for some of our beloved employees. Bryan Gamble, Bruce Branche, Dale Turman and Vicky Talmadge retired over the winter. We thank each of them deeply for their lasting impact on our cooperative.



BRYAN GAMBLE
29 years of service



BRUCE BRANCHE
30 years of service



DALE TURMAN
24 years of service



VICKY TALMADGE
27 years of service

Family News ...



Denny Tompkin's dachshund, Jazzy, had an unexpected litter of puppies!



Bill Roberts is a proud homeowner.



Ashley Johnson and her family adventured at Helen, Georgia, and Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in late December.



Maria Suarez and her family made a road trip to Providence Canyon in Georgia.



Maria Suarez is going to be a grandma! Carter James Albelo is due in April.



Leslie Grinnell celebrated her son Gavin's 9th birthday with a trip to Delaware.



Daniel Warren enjoyed a family vacation to Legoland and SeaWorld in late November.



Joe Barclay's grandbaby Mayven Adele Thompson was born Jan. 1, 2021, weighing 6 pounds, 7 ounces and measuring 18.5 inches.



Cathy Erixton' grandson, Rhipp James, was born Nov. 12, weighing 7 pounds, 13 ounces and measuring 20 inches long.



Cecil Cheshire had a magical time at Disney with his granddaughters, Paisley and Maisy.



Ryan Ratliff and his family had a super time at Universal Studios Orlando!



Joe Barclay's daughter Brittany married Woody Harvey Dec. 21.



Jessica Graham and her husband, Geoff, are expecting their first child on March 28.



Raymond Poole's daughter, Cambree, and her best friend Maci Thomas got their first bucks on the same morning.



Tray Boatright's daughter, Natalie, got her first buck!

second time in the co-op's history and met all our financial plan targets. These are accomplishments to be proud of.

In this issue, we recap our 2020 SMORE results, offer work-and home-life tips, and say farewell to four co-workers as they move into retirement. In the Family News section, you'll find special winter memories including holiday vacations, growing families, and some deer season victories that are worth checking out.

Thank you all for displaying what it means to be #Coop-Strong in 2020. While we share uncertainties about the future, I remain hopeful because our resilience is the driving force that will keep us moving forward.

— Mike

SUBMITTED BY ALICIA ELMORE

Easy Mac & Cheese

Recipe from: Land O Lakes "Treasury of Country Recipes"

Ingredients

- 7 ounces uncooked elbow macaroni
- 1/4 cup butter
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 2 cups (250 grams) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 cups (8 ounces) cheddar cheese, cubed
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley

Instructions

Cook macaroni according to package directions and drain.

Use a 3-quart casserole dish to melt 1/4 cup of butter in the microwave (50 to 60 seconds).

Stir in flour, then microwave until bubbly (1 to 1 1/2 minutes).

Stir in milk, cream cheese, salt, pepper and mustard.

Microwave 4 to 5 minutes, stirring halfway through, until thickened.

Stir in macaroni and cubed cheese.

In a small bowl, stir the remaining ingredients together and sprinkle the mixture over the mac and cheese.

Microwave on high until heated through (8 to 10 minutes).

