



# DREMC NEWS

JUNE/JULY 2024

## Teamwork in action

When a devastating EF-3 tornado touched down in Maury County on May 8, with wind speeds reaching 140 mph, the spirit of teamwork was quickly evident. The local business and residential communities rallied to assist their neighbors directly impacted by the twister that damaged homes and businesses, injured 12, and took the life of one. Together, those impacted met the challenges head-on with resilience.

When severe storms are predicted, alerts are broadcast to our phones, televisions and weather radios urging all to be prepared. We were, yet the DREMC team knows all too well how strong wind gusts, heavy rains and fallen trees can impact the electric system and cause widespread outages in a matter of minutes.

At the height of the storm approximately 21,342 members lost power across the DREMC service area, most of whom were in Maury County - that's about one-fourth of the total DREMC membership.

A 34-year veteran employee of DREMC stated he had never seen this magnitude of damage in one small portion of the service area.

Two DREMC substations sustained damage, and TVA lost its feed to the DREMC Rally Hill substation. Metal poles built to withstand substantial winds were no match for the storm. Wooden power poles were splintered like toothpicks. Some 50 poles were damaged and had to be replaced before lines could be rebuilt to several areas.

Miles of downed electric lines, splintered poles, flooding, fallen trees, debris blocking roads, and the rugged terrain of rural county areas presented difficult hurdles. Teamwork in action carried us across the finish line safely, and most all outages were restored within 48 hours.

During any power outage, the most commonly asked question is "When will my power be restored?" This is difficult to answer because each power outage is different.

Given our reliance on electricity, there's simply never a good time to be without power. Regardless of the proactive measures made by our team to enhance and secure system reliability, it is



inevitable, from time to time, that the lights will go out due to causes beyond DREMC's control, such as severe weather events.

We share a few things about power restoration on page 4 to shed a little light on how the DREMC team plans and responds to outages and how members can prepare in advance to lessen the inconvenience while the power is out.

We are always thankful for all who take the time to send encouraging messages and prayers by email and social media - especially during emergency situations as we faced recently.

The teamwork and dedication displayed throughout the May tornado event were incredible, and we could not be more proud of the DREMC team and what they accomplished in a short period of time.

Teamwork in action gets things done!

# Congratulations

## to the 2024 DREMC writing contest winners!

Duck River Electric is proud to introduce the 10 high school juniors who participated in the 2024 Washington Youth Tour, a week-long tour of our nation's capital in June. Students were awarded the tour based on their winning stories submitted through DREMC's annual writing contest.

"We congratulate the achievements of these impressive youth," said DREMC's Communication Specialist Connie Potts, who served as an advisor during the tour. "We're pleased that DREMC takes an active role in offering educational opportunities for our youth, such as the Washington Youth Tour, to allow them to experience this once-in-a-lifetime trip."

Students participating in the writing contest not only tour Washington, D.C. but are also eligible to compete on a state level for scholarships ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Each year, DREMC invites high school juniors, who receive electric service from the cooperative, to write short stories of up to 900 words about electric cooperatives and how they serve their communities. This year's contest theme was titled "Electric Cooperatives Connect" and encouraged students to focus on how electric cooperatives have far-reaching impacts on Tennessee communities through investments in energy, education, broadband, economic development and more.

The story written by Emmalee Stokes was submitted to the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association to compete on the statewide level for a scholarship. In her story, Emmalee shares her thoughts on how "Electric Cooperatives Connect" with the following excerpts:

*"The cooperative's commitment to the community went beyond powering homes; it extended to nurturing dreams, fostering education, and creating an environment with opportunities to thrive. When a community is connected through reliable and forward-thinking utilities, it paves the way for possibilities and a brighter, more sustainable future for all."*

Contest submissions were judged by Tennessee Valley Public Power Association (TVPPA) staff members. TVPPA, based in Chattanooga, TN, is a nonprofit, regional service organization representing the interests of electric utilities operating within the Tennessee Valley Authority service area.

"We appreciate TVPPA's assistance in selecting this year's winners," said DREMC interim President and CEO Troy Crowell, "and we appreciate the schools in our service area for allowing DREMC to offer this writing contest to their students."

"We applaud these winners and wish them continued success in their future endeavors," Crowell adds. "DREMC is committed to being a partner in the communities we serve, and the writing competition opens a door for us to provide this opportunity to the students."



**Abigail Armstrong**  
Marshall County



**Teresa Barnett**  
Marshall County



**Stevie Dickenson**  
Bedford County



**Jonathyn Frederick**  
Coffee County



**Abigail Haley**  
Marshall County



**Reagan Harris**  
Marshall County



**Marisol Ibarra**  
Franklin County



**Lana Lemmon**  
Bedford County



**Emmalee Stokes**  
Marshall County



**Andrew Winsett**  
Marshall County





# Join us for the 2024 Annual Membership Meeting!

**Saturday, Aug. 17**  
**Harris Middle School**  
**570 Eagle Blvd., Shelbyville, TN**

Registration opens at 8:30 a.m., and the meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.  
 More details about the 2024 DREMC Annual Membership Meeting are  
 available in your July bill statement, in the August issue of *The Tennessee*  
*Magazine*, social media, [dremc.com](http://dremc.com) and other news media.

*Why  
should you?  
attend*

**DOOR PRIZES**  
**REFRESHMENTS**  
**BUSINESS MEETING**

**ATTENDANCE GIFTS FOR  
THE FIRST 300 MEMBERS**  
**PLUS, THE OPPORTUNITY  
TO WIN THE GRAND PRIZE!**



# Things to know ABOUT POWER RESTORATION

- Restoring power is a team effort. During outages, the Duck River Electric team works on location and behind the scenes to restore power as soon as possible and assist members.
- DREMC assesses the damage first. Every outage is different, and we don't know the extent of the damage or what materials and equipment need to be repaired/replaced until the electric infrastructure and potential hazards can be assessed.
- Restoration is normally prioritized by the largest number of members DREMC can get back on in the shortest amount of time. Crews also prioritize public safety concerns (energized lines on the ground, etc.) and restoring power to critical services (911 dispatch, hospitals, etc.).
- Power restoration is dangerous. Besides working around high voltage electricity, the crew's safety is also impacted by weather conditions, falling trees and fast-moving cars passing work zones in or near the road. Many times, crews begin making repairs in the midst of heavy rain, lightning and other weather elements, which multiply the dangers of their job.
- Flickering lights are a good thing! Some mistake flickering lights for outages, but these "blinks" are important because they indicate that DREMC equipment works and prevents possible outages such as those caused by wayward wildlife or stray tree limbs on the lines.
- Have a backup plan and be prepared. If you depend on electricity for life support purposes, it is wise to have a back-up plan. Unfortunately, DREMC does not always know how long restoration efforts will take.
- The DREMC team is prepared to work long hours and has a plan to help keep crews safe. When outages last for several days, we plan time for crews to eat, rest and 'recharge.' During restoration efforts, rest periods are especially important during extreme hot and cold weather. To lend further support, the DREMC team working behind the scenes may deliver meals to an area where crews are working to save time, or it may be safer for crews to take their meal breaks at local restaurants.
- The system is monitored 24/7/365. Outages are populated automatically by your electric meter, and you can view where active outages are occurring on the outage map at [drenc.com](http://drenc.com) or use the app.
- It is important to keep DREMC members informed of power restoration efforts by sharing updates and relevant outage information on social media and the news section of the website.

## Super Pull brings excitement in 2024

Join Duck River Electric as we plug into the excitement at the 2024 Chapel Hill Lions Club Super Pull of the South!

**P**lug into the excitement and take it all in! Watch big horsepower trucks and tractors roar down the track, chasing their share of over \$100,000 in prize money. Enjoy the food and vendor tents. Visit DREMC under the big tent near the grandstand for giveaway items, games for all ages, and register for valuable door prizes.

We hope to see you there!

**JULY 19 FRI** 7PM & **JULY 20 SAT** 7PM

310 N. HORTON PKWY. CHAPEL HILL, TN 37034

Gates open at 4:00 p.m.

For details and to purchase tickets, visit [lionssuperpull.com](http://lionssuperpull.com).



# United Communications awarded \$7.98M to expand its 10-county fiber network



Local internet provider United Communications announced that its recent \$7.98 million award through the Middle-Mile Buildout grant program will add 267 miles of high-capacity fiber to rural communities across 10 counties in Middle Tennessee.

The term “middle mile” refers to the critical, high-capacity infrastructure that makes it possible for individuals to connect to the internet. From a parent streaming a movie with their children to a 911 dispatcher responding to a distress call, middle-mile networks affect everyone within a community.

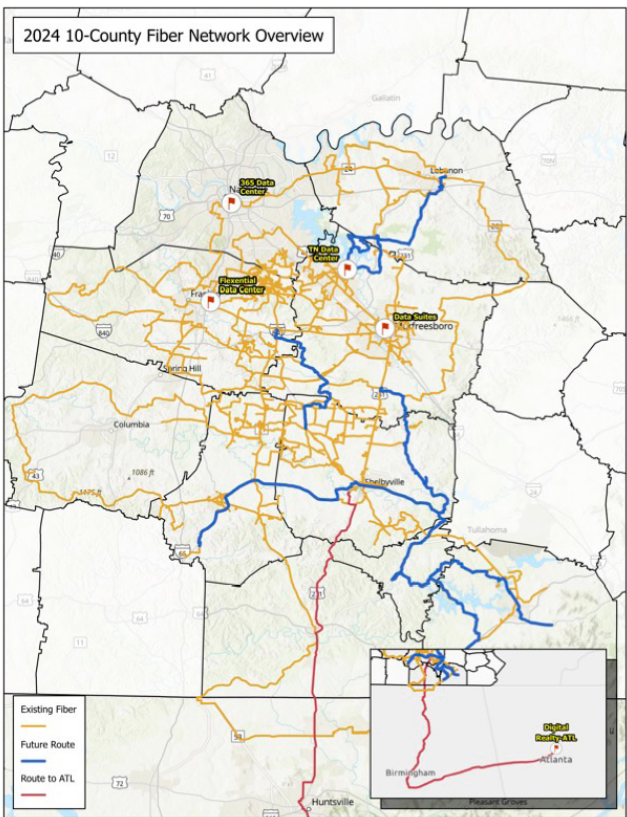
“Imagine the challenge of getting to the interstate if there were no roads, bridges or tunnels beyond the end of your driveway,” said United Communication’s Chief Operating Officer Josh Lynch. “In terms of internet access, that’s the reality that many of our neighbors are facing every day. With these middle-mile grants, United will be able to provide a major fiber investment into our communities and give them access to the same internet connectivity found in the biggest cities in the world.”

United’s network not only supports services to over 90,000 homes and businesses in Middle Tennessee but also supports many governments and enterprise businesses.

Expansion of this network will add significant capacity and new routes to towns across the region, including Lebanon, Shelbyville, Winchester, Lynchburg, Lewisburg, Franklin, Murfreesboro, and Nashville, supporting United’s efforts to serve businesses of all sizes and bring broadband access to traditionally underserved communities.

Additionally, the new infrastructure will support Project UNITE, United’s effort to serve every Middle Tennessean who still lacks reliable broadband connections. Almost 400,000 Tennesseans do not have access to a broadband provider, representing more than 5% of homes and businesses in the state.

United applied for the Middle-Mile Buildout grants in 2023 through Project UNITE, its initiative to invest in universal broadband coverage across Middle Tennessee through local



*A map displaying United Communications’ middle-mile routes, fiber networks, and on-net data centers in Middle Tennessee.*

partnerships and grant funding opportunities.

“While other providers start building in densely populated cities and work their way out to rural areas, we are committed to building in the rural areas and working our way in,” said United Communications President and CEO, William Bradford. “These grant projects will connect many different parts of our middle mile infrastructure into a single, resilient network with future expansion capacity.”

## GRANT AWARD DETAILS



- \$1.78 million** construct 58 miles of fiber network in Rutherford and Wilson counties
- \$3.15 million** construct 94 miles of fiber network in Williamson, Bedford, Franklin, and Moore counties
- \$3.05 million** construct 115 miles of fiber network in Marshall, Bedford, Moore, and Franklin counties

Visit [United's website](#) for more information about the Project UNITE initiative and how you and community leaders can support future expansions in Middle Tennessee.

# Welcome back to monthly issues of

## THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE



Beginning in August, Duck River Electric will begin sending monthly issues of *The Tennessee Magazine* to residential members' mailboxes.

*The Tennessee Magazine* is published monthly by the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association, and its member electric cooperatives, including DREMC, have the option of participating in the magazine on varying levels of production.

The publication has a circulation of more than 550,000 around the world and is the most widely circulated monthly publication in the state of Tennessee.

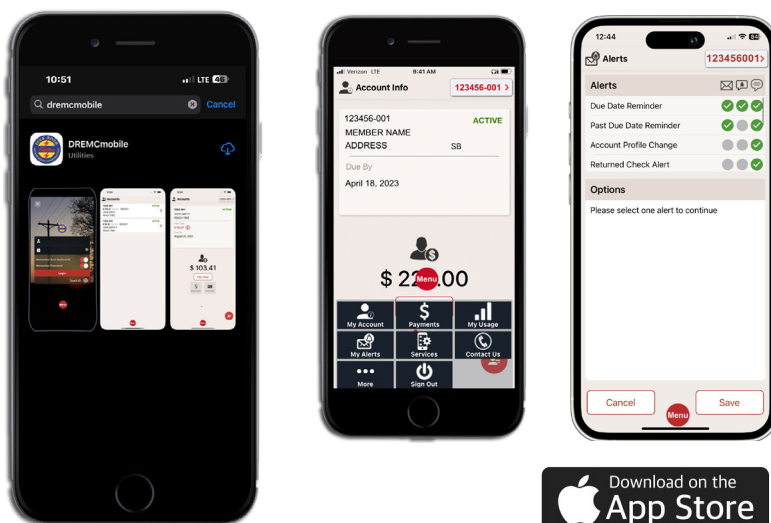
The magazine not only includes news and helpful tips from DREMC but also stories about interesting people across the state and spotlights on their unique jobs, talents and interests. Award-winning recipes and Tennessee history are featured in each issue as well as travel suggestions, upcoming events and contests.

We look forward to delivering the printed magazine to your mailbox each month and sharing the digital version online at [dremc.com](http://dremc.com)!

## You're busy. DREMC can help.

Let the DREMC mobile app features help you manage your account!

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- Set alerts and reminders
- Make payments
- View energy use data
- Report outages
- And more



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