

Season's Greetings

From the Directors and Employees of
Shelby Electric Cooperative, Shelby Energy Company,
and PWR-net High-Speed Internet

Four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop

With the holiday season finally upon us, Santa and his elves have been especially busy as they gear up for their biggest night of the year.

It is no secret that Santa is known for running an efficient workshop. How else could he make all those toys in time for Christmas Eve deliveries? Rumor has it that one way Santa ensures an efficient workspace is through energy-saving measures.



Here are four ways Santa saves energy in his workshop:

1. Santa leaves his decorations up year-round, so by using LED holiday light strands, he is able to save on his monthly energy bills. LED holiday strands can last up to 40 seasons, which make them a great option for any festive home.
2. Santa requires several power tools to make a year's worth of new toys. That is why he insists on using cordless power tools with the ENERGY STAR rating. According to energystar.gov, 2 billion kWh hours of electricity could be saved if all power tools in the U.S. used ENERGY STAR rated battery chargers, which is equivalent to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 1.7 million tons!
3. Mrs. Claus loves to keep warm by the fire in the evenings, and Santa knows one of the best tricks to ensure fireplace efficiency. While a fireplace can keep a small area of your home cozy and warm, it can also pull heated air from the room through the chimney. That is why Santa always closes the fireplace flue when a fire is not burning.
4. Santa also saves energy by using power strips. Power strips are ideal for workshops, craft nooks, game rooms, and other spaces in your home. With one simple switch, you can conveniently control all the devices and electronics that are plugged into the power strip.

This holiday season, take a page from Santa's book and remember to save energy when possible. With these four tips, you will be well on your way to savings and hopefully, Santa's 'nice' list!



Offices Closed
 Your cooperative offices will be closed on December 24 and 25 to celebrate Christmas. Offices will also be closed on January 1 to celebrate New Year's Day.



REMINDER:

December 31, 2020 is the application deadline for the Thomas H. Moore IEC Memorial Scholarships.

The LaVern and Nola McEntire Lineworker's Scholarship deadline is April 30, 2021.

Visit www.shelbyelectric.coop and click on the "Community" tab for more information or call us toll-free 1-800-677-2612.

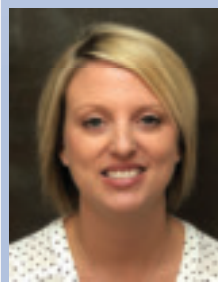
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**Office Hours:
 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**



Employee News

Jill George joins the Cooperative



Jill George

Jill is the new Cashier/Receptionist at the cooperative. She started her employment in October. Before coming to the co-op, Jill worked for the law firm Heavner, Beyers & Mihlar and HSHS Medical Group in Decatur. She lives in Findlay with her husband Ronnie. In her free time, she likes mountain bike riding, golfing, and spending time with her family, friends, and poodle, Cooper. Jill is looking forward to meeting and getting to know the members of the cooperative.

Samantha (Hatfield) England moves to Billing Department



Sami England

Sami, as she likes to be called, transitioned to the position of Member Account Representative following the retirement of Vicki Blackwell in October. She was previously the Cashier/Receptionist for the cooperative. Sami is settling into her new role at the cooperative and enjoys being able to help members when they stop by the office or call in for assistance. In her spare time, she likes riding side-by-sides, hunting, spending time on the river, and hanging with her family and friends.

The cooperative would like to congratulate Sami on her recent marriage to Cole England.

Energy Efficiency Tip of the Month

Energy bills can increase during winter for a variety of reasons, like houseguests, more time spent at home, and shorter days and longer nights. Small actions, like turning down your thermostat, replacing old bulbs with LEDs, and washing clothes in cold water can help you save.



Blackwell retires after a Spooktacular career



When people start their careers, the last thing they think about is their retirement date. Well, as the haunting month of Halloween approached, that was the exact thing Member Account Representative Vicki Blackwell started thinking about. After a 31-year career at the cooperative, Vicki retired in October.

A Michigan native, Vicki's family moved to Shelbyville when she was 7 years old, and it has been her home ever since. Vicki graduated from Shelbyville High School and attended Sparks Business College formerly located in downtown Shelbyville.

"I was finishing up school when the cooperative reached out to Sparks and wanted to hire someone on a temporary basis to enter survey information. Thirty-one years later, I decided to retire from the co-op," noted Blackwell. "At first, I wasn't sure if this temporary job would turn out to be a career. After three months, I knew this was where I wanted to be," added Blackwell.

For the first five years, Vicki worked with all the departments, helping wherever she was needed. She eventually became a permanent fixture in the billing department as a Member Account Representative.

One of the many community projects Vicki played a key role in was an annual Halloween Spooktacular. For four consecutive years in October, the cooperative turned their hallways into a haunted house as a free family community event. "I may have been the 'go-to person,' but a lot of the employees, inside and out, helped create quite the

haunting Halloween experience. I still miss it," commented Blackwell.

Over the years, Vicki always wondered if working remotely would be an option and if the front lobby would be remodeled. Interestingly, both happened in the past year. The renovation project started in the fall of 2019 and due to COVID-19, most of the employees started working remotely in March. In July, the employees were back in the office and the lobby had a new look.

When asked what she will miss most about her time here, she said, "Everything! So many great people, and so many great stories, many of which I can't repeat," she chuckled. "I really enjoyed meeting the members and helping them out when they would come by or call in seeking answers to questions," added Blackwell.

Now that the career part of her life is over, Vicki is looking forward to spending more time with her grandchildren. Vicki and her husband Faron have two grown children and four grandkids, two in North Carolina and two in Shelbyville. After enjoying some time relaxing, Vicki would like to join a committee or group like volunteering for the Red Cross and maybe even learn macramé.

Blackwell said it was tough deciding to retire and she will miss everyone. However, she will enjoy time at home and not having to work virtually, and she can always visit the cooperative to admire the remodel. "I'm not going to lie; I will miss the people the most. After 31 years, the people I've worked with became like family, but I am ready for the next chapter in my life."

Best wishes on your retirement Vicki!



Vicki Blackwell, pictured third from left, coordinated a successful community haunted house, Spooktacular, which ran from 2007 through 2010.

REAL LIFE REAL POWER

Getting Real with Marla and Appliances in Demand

If your Christmas wish list includes a Clark Griswold-esque swimming pool or relaxing in a hot tub, your hopes may be dashed quicker than receiving a bonus from the Jelly of the Month Club. Maybe you have thoughts of preserving Frosty the Snowman in a brand new freezer? That thought may melt faster than a snowball roasting on an open fire.

Covid-19 strikes again. Due to shutdowns and social-distancing requirements for employees, many manufacturers and shipping facilities slowed down production. Additionally, many people chose to spend their vacation dollars on home improvements. Supply slowed and demand increased. Even the elves could not keep up.

Wet Pools and Spas in Effingham confirmed the supply and demand effect. They have experienced a huge increase in demand for residential pools and hot tubs. Unfortunately, they also have experienced the supply chain slowing down. Hot tub production slowed due to smoke from the wildfires on the west coast, reduced numbers of factory employees due to coronavirus, and material use being shifted for the manufacturing of protective shields.

People also found themselves not eating out and not grocery shopping as often. This helped lead to an increase in freezer purchases. Freezers are now extremely hard



to come by. Macari's Service Center in Shelbyville vouched for this locally. Future inventory is often spoken for before it is even delivered from the manufacturer.

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), a new trend reflects pandemic-related lifestyle changes. The NAHB surveyed remodelers and asked them what projects increased in demand specifically due to the pandemic. The top five, in order, were bathrooms, decks, kitchens, patios, and porches. People are spending more time at home and investing to make their houses and properties more multifunctional.

Now that it is beginning to look a lot like Christmas and social distancing is still recommended,

people are trying to extend the use of their patios and outdoor living spaces. Some major box stores limit patio heater purchases to two. As of the writing of this article, many are now out of stock. Baby, it's going to be cold outside.

Through the holiday season, visions of sugar plums may dance in our heads. However, the reality of too many sugar cookies may require exercise unless we intend to keep a round belly that shakes when we laugh like a bowl full of jelly! I am going to predict the next surge of residential purchases may include home gym equipment.

*~Marla Foor,
Communication Specialist*



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