



Innovations in Education

When considering the exciting film advancements and opportunities rapidly multiplying in our area, cutting-edge accomplishments at the high school level may not be the first example to spring to mind. But one local educator seeks to change that perception with the implementation of a unique alternative to traditional teaching methods and the construction of a technologically advanced studio tool.

Michael Britt, 2nd VP for the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Southeast (NATAS SE) and board chair for the NATAS SE Student Production Awards Committee, as well as Film and Television Production Director at the Central Educational Center (CEC) in Newnan, requested and received a grant from Coweta-Fayette EMC's Operation Round Up program last year, and the results of that endeavor have been astounding.

Under Britt's direction, students in grades 9-12 in film and television production classes, as well as those in set construction training, built an entire infinity cyclorama, or "cyc," wall over a period of six months. Upon completion, this massive undertaking resulted in one of the few cycloramas available for film and TV production south of Atlanta.

A cyc wall, when painted white, curved and evenly lit, is a production tool used to suggest unlimited space. A cyc studio has a walled backdrop incorporating one or more curved surfaces creating a background with no perceptible beginning or end with regard to flooring and walls; in essence, it's like being inside a giant egg. These spaces are used for a variety of purposes in television and film, broadcast media, photography and virtual reality studios. In still photography, the advantage of a cyc wall is the ability to make a background basically disappear. In the virtual reality industry, this type of tool is not just beneficial, it's essential. The computer systems that produce the special effects seen in more and more movies today require filming against an absolutely seamless backdrop painted a specific shade of blue or green, otherwise known as blue or green screen.

The goal of Britt's project was to enrich his students' educational experience beyond that of the traditional pupil. Participants learned to use power drills, skill saws, jigsaws and electric nailers. They furthered their experience across the soft skill spectrum, especially in the areas of teamwork, cooperation, productivity, organizational aptitude and communication. Students

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The President's Message

*Chris Stephens
President and CEO*

At Coweta-Fayette EMC, our employees focus every day on exceeding your expectations. We are dedicated to safely providing you, our member-owners, reliable and reasonably priced electricity... but we want to go further. We strive to exceed your expectations by investing in our employees so they are prepared to provide exceptional member service, and also offer programs to help you save money when meeting all of your energy needs. As a result of our recently updated strategic plan, we are enhancing three of our core values—member value, reliability and employee value.

When it comes to member value, your satisfaction with service is measured daily through feedback. Our data clearly shows that member satisfaction is relative to your bill amount. Therefore, we strive to be in the top 25% of the lowest-costing cooperatives in Georgia and maintain the lowest rates compared to our neighboring utilities. We also participate in the American Customer Satisfaction Index Survey, recently receiving a score of 83% (pretty high compared to investor-owned utilities at 72%). Our goal is to reach a score of 85%. This can be achieved by providing reliable service, maintaining cost and offering energy-related information and solutions to save you money. Whether it is efficiency, solar generation, home automation, energy storage or natural gas, our goal is to be your trusted power expert.

Reliability is an indication of how we are performing. Although we can't control Mother Nature, we

must continue to maintain our system and look for solutions that allow us to minimize the impact of inclement weather and other potential outages. We have historically been in the top 25% of all cooperatives in the state regarding outage time per consumer, and our goal is to reduce that time by 10%. One of our key initiatives is to use technology and equipment on our lines that will help isolate faulted sections, reducing the number of members affected. We will have the capability of monitoring this equipment from our office so crews can be sent directly to the location of the problem. We are currently installing this technology for testing purposes, with further implementation planned in the near future.

Our number one employee objective is safety—for each other and the general public. We consider it a core value, not just a priority. We will continue to provide education and training to hopefully eliminate all preventable accidents. By reviewing our processes and evaluating technological solutions, we want to increase corporate efficiency. With 20% of our personnel eligible for retirement in the next five years, we will continue to manage and enhance our workforce plan to ensure we have capable employees to step in and take on new roles.

Because we are a cooperative, we have a special responsibility to support the communities we serve. We enjoy helping improve the quality of life for our neighbors. Please take time to read in this newsletter about the things our employees were able to assist with during the holiday season.

In 2017, my focus is on you and our employees. This is nothing new at Coweta-Fayette EMC, but it is an opportunity for us to reassess our goals to better serve you. It is not just our focus, it is our commitment.

Experience the Trip of a Lifetime: Washington Your Tour 2017



*Washington Youth Tour
2016 winners: Suji Han
and Juhee Shim.*

The Washington Youth Tour, scheduled for June 8-15, is a leadership opportunity and educational experience like no other. Sponsored by local electric cooperatives like Coweta-Fayette EMC, this trip is awarded to exceptional high school sophomores and juniors who compete for a chance to tour Washington, D.C. along with more than 100 other teens from across the state and more than 1,400 teens from across the country!

Highlights include visits to:

- Mt. Vernon
- Arlington National Cemetery
- Smithsonian Institute Museums
- Lincoln, FDR and Jefferson Memorials
- Cruise on the Potomac River
- World War II, Korean and Vietnam Memorials

Entrants are required to write a 500-word essay from a choice of topics supplied by the EMC, and the deadline will be March 6. Students interested in learning leadership skills, developing lifelong friendships and making a pilgrimage to our nation's capital should contact Amy Lott by phone at 770-252-7446 or by email at alott@utility.org for more information and a kit of resource materials.



"No one has ever become poor by giving." – Anne Frank

Serving Others: Holiday Projects Offer EMC Employees a Chance to Give Back

Of the seven co-op principles that guide Coweta-Fayette EMC, "Concern for Community" is one of our favorites. To give back to communities that have given us so much is an honor for our personnel, who once again joined together to make several local benevolent projects successful during the holiday season.

In November, the cooperative's Employee Benevolent Committee asked for nonperishable food, toiletries, clothing and monetary donations to benefit One Roof Ecumenical Alliance Outreach, a Coweta coalition offering spiritual/financial support; Bridging the Gap Community Outreach, a Newnan non-profit serving 1,000+ people monthly; the Real Life Center, a Fayette organization helping families get back on their feet; and the Fayette Samaritans, a ministry providing food, clothing and financial aid. Through an area Rotary Club program, turkeys were also delivered to many Cowetans before Thanksgiving.

By mid-December, thousands of items had been sorted, boxed and delivered. In addition to these donations, the Benevolent Committee gave \$2,000 and was matched another \$2,000 by the EMC, making a grand total of \$4,000 spread equally among the four organizations to help with Atlanta Food Bank purchases. Fruit baskets were hand-delivered to assisted living facility residents at Southland Nursing Home in Peachtree City and Insignia Nursing Home in Newnan. EMC volunteers selflessly donated their time – as well as treasure – by stocking shelves on-site, spreading cheer, cleaning refrigerators, dusting, vacuuming, sorting clothes, presenting gifts and much, much more. They also served dinner to local veterans during the annual VFW Christmas party in Newnan.

Coweta-Fayette EMC is happy to help our communities during the holidays and throughout the year – can't wait to see what blessings abound in 2017!





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gained real-world set production know-how and created a powerful tool that can be used to improve projects for years to come. They learned to work under a deadline, broadened the scope and possibilities of students working on future projects and created an instructional video as they built the wall to be used across the country on School Video News and worldwide on YouTube.

Innovations included broadening the scope of CEC's film and TV production curriculum to include hands-on building, advancing skillsets for construction students and introducing set design techniques to others, using a new production tool not typically seen by students until college or their careers, creating something clients outside the school could use and designing a project to teach the techniques required by local studios, like Pinewood.

Britt has worked in the television/movie business for more than 30 years. In most studios, cyclorama walls are a basic tool of production, but it's a unique tool CEC's studios have always lacked.

"I thought, 'Wow, we can do this—we have the student resources to build it. All we need is funding for the materials,'" he said.

The cyc wall has been used for several student and outside projects already, including one local television show, "Spotlight on Coweta Sports."

"I doubt you'll find a cyclorama wall in any other high school in Georgia," Britt said. "The students love it—it's been awesome."

Use Your Space Heater Safely



Many people turn to space heaters as a convenient source of warmth in winter months. However, space heaters can be dangerous if not used properly.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that more than 25,000 residential fires every year are associated with space heaters. More than 300 people die in these fires. In addition, an estimated 6,000 people annually receive hospital emergency care for burn injuries connected with space heaters.

Here are some tips for using your electric space heater safely:

- Keep the heater at least 3 feet from flammable items like curtains, furniture or bedspreads.
- Select a space heater with a guard around the heating element.
- When buying a heater, choose one that has been tested and certified by a nationally recognized testing institution like Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Buy a heater that can handle the area you want to heat.
- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions.
- Keep children and pets away from space heaters.
- Never leave a space heater unattended.
- Never go to sleep with a space heater on.
- Never use or store flammable liquids near a space heater.
- Do not use a heater in a bathroom—it's a high-moisture area that could cause damage.
- Keep heaters away from water to prevent electrocution.
- Do not use an extension cord with a space heater.
- Do not use the heater to dry clothes.
- Be sure the heater's plug fits snugly in an outlet. The cord and plug may feel warm when operating since the unit draws so much power, but they should not feel hot. If they do, unplug the heater and have a qualified repair person check for problems.
- Do not attempt to repair a broken heater yourself. It should be checked and repaired by a qualified appliance service center.

Source: The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

Chris Stephens, President and CEO
C. Bradford Sears, Jr., Attorney
Douglas B. Warner, Attorney

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POWERlines

Editor: Mary Ann Bell

807 Collinsworth Road, Palmetto, GA 30268
(770) 502-0226

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770-502-0226
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Restoring Power

We have already had a close call with snow and ice this year. Luckily, the worst part of the storm moved above our service territory and only left us with freezing temperatures and a small amount of ice. If we aren't as lucky next time, the following diagram shows the order in which power will be restored.

When electricity goes out, most of us expect it to be back on within a few hours. But when a major storm causes widespread damage, longer outages may result. Co-op line crews work long, hard hours to restore service safely to the greatest number of consumers in the shortest time possible. Here's what's going on if you find yourself in the dark.

