



# South River EMC Communicator

## BUZZ WORDS IN ACTION

If you have a child or grandchild in school, inevitably you have heard the phrase STEM, or even more recently, the phrase STEAM.

STEM is curriculum based on the idea of educating students in four specific areas—science, technology, engineering and mathematics—in an interdisciplinary and applied approach.

Meanwhile, STEAM is science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics, placing arts back into an area of focus.

Since the introduction of STEM/STEAM, schools have been scrambling to make sure they have resources to address the areas of curriculum. One such place districts have found funding is through Bright Ideas.



Students at work in a STEM lab at Lafayette Elementary in Harnett County.

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In 2019, South River EMC funded five grants for STEM labs, and countless others for STEM materials.

"STEM is a district-wide focus this year in our county, so it's naturally a focus in our school, too," said Jennifer Baldwin, a teacher at Plain View Elementary. "All students at our school must complete at least one defined STEM project every nine weeks. This is a county-wide requirement, too."

Plain View Elementary has converted an extra classroom into a STEAM lab, where teachers can take their classes, or where STEAM products can be checked out for use in the classroom.

"I want to teach them (students) to collaborate and think outside of the box. I also want them to know that it's okay to fail sometimes," said Baldwin. "We learn through trial and error and from our mistakes. That's the beauty of STEM, it pushes them to think creatively and extends their learning beyond the regular classroom."

The same holds true in Johnston County, where the superintendent's office is very invested in STEM teachings.

"In the beginning of the year convocation, the superintendent stressed the need to incorporate STEM instruction to improve academic achievement and opportunities for students," said Stephanie Lofink, a teacher at Benson Elementary. "We have tech experts that assist with obtaining funds from grants, and established a STEM professional

learning committee group last year. They also created an entire school called Innovation Academy, and some areas are beginning to hold robotics competitions."

The excitement our educators see in their students makes these lessons all the more worthwhile.

"They are so excited, they love the new space and trying things," said Elizabeth Babcock, a teacher at Lafayette Elementary. "They are loving the open space and being able to work with materials they often don't get to use in their classrooms."

"Just the sight of the kits when they came made them squeal with excitement. I set a few expectations, and observed to see what works and what does not," said Lofink. "We are all learning and growing with access to these new materials. I'm having a ball watching them work in teams, and helping them learn cooperation and conflict resolution skills. Students are engaged and on task and disappointed when class is over, so YES, they are excited."

And each teacher has selected a variety of items to make their STEM/STEAM labs a possibility.

"Currently I am working with the kids on what a STEM lab is and what are some of the activities they can do. With us just starting to get materials into the STEM lab, we have used VR headsets for virtual tours and Ozobots for coding," said



Student projects at Benson Elementary.

Shannon Bass, a teacher at Angier Elementary. "They have also learned how to create green screen movies using iMovie and Play Doh. Once they learn how these resources work, we will begin putting them with concrete standards throughout the rest of this school year and years to come."

Ozobots are small robots that teach children programming whether it is on paper, or on technology like an iPad. K'nex, which has been around over 20 years, is a construction toy system that has some motorized projects as well. Some teachers have opted to purchase Kiwico kits, which are themed kits with a STEM activity for students to complete. There are also STEM comprehensive kits, which have prompts and materials to get creative juices flowing.

Of course, there is some apprehension from students occasionally. Whether they tend toward perfection, or have apprehension when working with others, the excitement of the projects and steadying words from their teachers have students settling in for a fun and imaginative time.

# OPERATION ROUND UP: YEAR IN REVIEW

In 2019, South River EMC awarded \$215,392 in Operation Round Up funds to local non-profits and schools in the South River EMC service area.

Through Operation Round Up, South River EMC rounds up electric bills of participating members to the next dollar. The funds are used to help support local non-profit agencies and educational institutions.

A recap of 2019 funding includes:

## December 2019

- Dunn Police Athletic Activities League
- Clement Volunteer Fire Dept. Inc.
- Johnston County Arts Council
- Beaver Dam Volunteer Fire Department
- Disabled American Veterans Ch. 74
- Suttontown EMS

- Spring Lake Fire Department
- Salem Methodist After-School (SMASH)
- Bethany Rural Fire Department
- Robin Paige Boys & Girls Club Carolina
- Mingo Masonic Lodge
- Hobbton Middle School

## September 2019

- South Wake Conservationists
- Transitions LifeCare
- Gray's Creek Volunteer Fire Dept. 24 Inc.
- Wade Community Fire Dept.
- Herring Volunteer Fire Dept.
- Vann Crossroads Fire Dept.
- Sampson County Sheriff's Office
- Autryville Area Fire Department
- Stedman Primary School
- South River EMC Bright Ideas
- Plain View Elementary
- South View High School

## June 2019

- Better Health of Cumberland County

- Falcon Fire Department, Inc.
- Eastover Volunteer Fire Department
- Champions Program
- Aversboro Battlefield Commission
- Piney Grove Volunteer Fire Department, Inc.
- Gray's Creek Volunteer Fire Department, Station 18
- Sampson Early College High School
- Roseboro-Salemburg Middle
- College Lakes Elementary
- Hobbton High School Band Program
- Cape Fear High

## March 2019

- Stedman Volunteer Fire Department
- Hargrove Elementary
- Clement Elementary

Since the inception of Operation Round Up, over \$2.3 million has been reinvested into the community, by South River EMC members like you.



## Disabled American Veterans Chapter 74

back: Joanne Cresswell, Robert Morrison, Commander John Woods and Steven Anderson.  
front: John Maher, Donald Simmons, Michael Lanning and Monica Stockwell

## YOU'RE INVITED!

**M**ark your calendar: South River EMC's Annual Meeting of Members is coming up on April 16.

Join us at the Crown Theatre and Arena in Fayetteville for entertainment and business.

The first 1,000 registered members receive a gift bag and a \$10

electric bill credit. Not only that, but refreshments and the vendor bazaar are provided before the meeting as well.



Henry Gilmore was the grand prize winner in 2019 and accepted the keys from CEO Chris Spears.

A family-friendly event, we invite you and your family to attend and learn more about your electric cooperative.

Hope to see you there!

## NOMINATIONS MADE BY COMMITTEE

**T**he South River EMC nominating committee met on January 7 to make nominations for the election of directors to be held during the 2020 Annual Meeting of Members on April 16 at the Crown Center in Fayetteville.

The following members have been nominated:

**District 1:** Kelly Harrington

**District 2:** Sue Flowers

**At-Large:** George Williams

Terms of office for directors are staggered so only three expire each year. The ways which directors may be elected:

1. By petition. Any 100 members of the Cooperative, acting together, may make nominations in writing, listing the nominees separately with respect to the particular term and the particular directorate district from which they are nominated, not less than 40 business days prior to the meeting.

2. From nominations by a committee on nominations.

### 2019 Nominating Committee Members:

District 1 - Glenda Taylor

District 2 - Raylon Wood

District 3 - Iris Lucas

District 4 - Johnnie Baggett

District 5 - Anthony "Tony" Warren

District 6 - Carol Hudson

District 7 - Warren Paul Jones

District 8 - Walter Clark

At Large - Alexander "Drake" Eastman



**Back:** Raylon Wood, Walter Clark, Johnnie Baggett, Drake Eastman, Warren Paul Jones. **Front:** Carol Hudson, Alexander Eastman and Glenda Taylor. **Not pictured:** Anthony "Tony" Warren and Iris Lucas.

## LAST CHANCE FOR REPORT CARDS

**I**t's time to send in your kids' most recent report card with at least one A for the "Give Us An A" drawing, to be held in February.

The drawing is held for students achieving at least one A on their report card. Each of the 15 students whose names are drawn will receive a \$25 gift card.

The program is open to students who are members, or children of members, of South River EMC. Just make a copy of the most recent report card with at least one A, and send it to the Cooperative.

You must include the member's name, South River EMC account number and a daytime telephone number, report cards will



not be accepted without this information.

**Send report cards to:**  
South River EMC  
"Give Us An A"  
PO Box 931  
Dunn, NC 28335

Or scanned and e-mailed to [connections@sremc.com](mailto:connections@sremc.com).

Report cards are due by close of business, February 10.

## LEARNING ON AND OFF THE COURT

**S**outh River EMC is accepting applications for current fifth, sixth and seventh graders to attend the Touchstone Energy basketball camps offered at NC State and UNC-Chapel Hill.

This opportunity gives students a unique experience to attend basketball camp on the state's largest college campuses.

Students statewide are encouraged to apply for one of 50 all-expenses-paid scholarships to attend the Roy Williams Basketball Camp at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (June 20-24) and the Wolfpack Women's Basketball Academy at North Carolina State University

in Raleigh (June 21-24).

The overnight camps are held in the summer, and campers work closely with coaches and players to develop fundamental skills, helping them perform and excel both on and off the court.

Campers must:

- Be a rising sixth, seventh or eighth grader. This means the student should currently be in fifth, sixth or seventh grade.
- Attend a school in the Cooperative service area.
- Have permission from a parent or guardian to attend. An information sheet must be signed.

- Provide their own transportation to and from camp.

Winners will attend the camps courtesy of South River EMC.

The Cooperative funds one scholarship to each camp. Applications are scored on academics, extracurricular activities and an essay that must accompany the application. The application period closes March 31.



Eligible students interested in the scholarship can contact the Cooperative at 910.892.8071, or download an application from [sremc.com/content/basketball-camps](http://sremc.com/content/basketball-camps).



Sometimes replacing insulation is necessary to improve comfort.

## HERO Homes Are Energy Savers

A high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is 30 percent more efficient than a home built to current building code. HERO homes are built with better insulation, fenestration, air sealing, equipment, and lighting packages to deliver such savings.

For information on HERO requirements, visit [energycodes.gov](http://energycodes.gov).

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For information on HERO rebates offered by South River EMC, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

## Sometimes Age Isn't Just A Number

How old is your heating and cooling unit? The older the unit, the more it could be costing you to heat your home.

So, when it's time to replace a heating and cooling unit, you need one with a high seasonal

energy efficiency ratio, or SEER, rating. SEER measures the cooling efficiency of a system.

Because heat pumps move heat, rather than create it, they are more efficient than a conventional heating and cooling system.

Purchasing a high-efficiency unit can make you eligible for a rebate. For details on rebates offered by South River EMC, visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.

## Improving Both Comfort And Cost

Insulating and weatherizing your home can help improve comfort and cost. So, if improvements can help, why not give them a try?

Insulation prevents heat transfer, or the loss of heat during

the winter and the gain of heat during the summer. Meanwhile, weatherizing prevents the loss of heated and cooled air through baseboard molding, around doors and windows and more.

Check your home for air leaks, or cool spots. And if you make improvements, you might be eligible for a rebate. Check out the information at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2222.

## Make Appliance Purchases Work For You

Appliances come and go, but an Energy Star certified appliance will save you energy and money while performing excellently.

Find out how by using the appliance calculator at [sremc.com](http://sremc.com), you can also read about the Energy Star appliance

rebate, or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.

## Smarter With A Smart Thermostat

What's your thermostat set on, and is it helping costs?

A smart thermostat can help you save because it learns your behavior and shares that data with you.

Not just that, but because of its accessibility, you can alter settings from anywhere you have Wi-Fi. Never missing an opportunity to save!

For information on the smart

thermostat rebate visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) or call 910.892.8071 x 2152. Interested in saving more? Check out our smart stat program at [sremc.com/content/smart-thermostat-smartstat](http://sremc.com/content/smart-thermostat-smartstat).

## Efficient Water Heating Choices

Replacing your water heater can be simple. However, storage water heaters lose heat from the tank, and uninsulated water lines.

They aren't bad units, they're just not the most energy-efficient. If considering a new water heater look at: fuel type,

availability and cost, there's also size and system efficiency.

These items are important because they help you decide what type of water heater you need. After all, you don't want a solar water heater if you don't have enough solar resource to recoup your costs. Perhaps a

heat pump water heater would be a better fit.

South River EMC offers a few rebates, so visit [sremc.com](http://sremc.com) to learn about water heating rebates or call 910.892.8071 x 2152.



Your water heater can help you save money, if you use it efficiently.

## Keep Dryer Vents Clean, Clear

When my wife and I were married we remodeled and updated an older home. It was reinsulated, rewired, and made almost new again so naturally, we needed new appliances. We've had good luck with our major appliances in 10 years; so far, we've only had to replace the washing machine.

With a family of five, the washer and dryer get a pretty good workout. Last year we began to notice clothes were still damp when we pulled them out of the dryer. We adapted by adding another 20-30 minutes of drying time to remove the moisture. We went on like this for months, until one day in early December, the "Check Vent" indicator light appeared on the dryer's display. I knew the dryer needed to "breathe" and, based on the warm air coming out of the vent outside, things appeared fine to me.

I checked online and found that moist lint can stick to the walls of the dryer vent pipe, decreasing air flow and performance and, in some cases, cause fire. I searched for a solution and found a vent-cleaning kit called the LintEater. This kit consists of a brush specifically

designed to clean a 4-inch dryer vent pipe and several flexible rods for long runs of pipe. The rods can be attached to a power drill to spin the brush as it moves through the pipe, removing lint.

I attached the brush and began to clean, spinning the brush with the drill. We were amazed at how much lint was removed. I added more sections until finally, I reached the end of the vent. When I was finished I was left with a one square-foot pile of lint, three inches deep!

Clothes dryers can be energy hogs, especially when they are running inefficiently. Our dryer is equipped with a 5000 watt heat element; that means it uses 5 kilowatt-hours for every hour of runtime. That's about 50 cents an hour so, if I have to run two cycles to dry one load of due to inefficiency, that's about \$1 per load, and



Advise Guy Aaron Jackson

that adds up. Also, dryers create negative pressure in a home by pulling in air from inside the home and dumping it outside. This negative pressure pulls in unconditioned air from outside through the cracks and crevices that exist around doors and windows. The longer the dryer runs, the more the heating and air conditioning will run to compensate.

The fire hazard risk alone is enough to encourage anyone to keep a check on the dryer vent. According to the National Fire Protection Association, around 17,000 house fires are attributed to clothes dryers each year. So, for safety and efficiency, make sure your dryer vent is clean!

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PO Box 931  
Dunn, NC 28335  
910.892.8071  
800.338.5530  
[www.sremc.com](http://www.sremc.com)