



South River EMC Communicator

THE BOOKWORM

Hargrove Elementary will welcome something new to its school this year, and it's something that only one other school in Sampson County has, and only 550 schools nationwide.

It is a vending machine, which might not sound all that unusual, however it is what's in the machine that makes it so unusual. The Bookworm, is a book vending machine and at Hargrove Elementary, will hold picture and chapter books.

"I actually got the idea from a Facebook group for school librarians that I'm part of," said Lauren Strickland, media specialist. "The librarians who had one just raved about it and I knew I had to have one!"

The Bookworm was an idea proposed by a vice principal at a New York School to improve reading scores. This individual contacted a local company, Global Vending Group, and proposed the idea. Scores aside, it is a different and exciting way to present new books to students.

"There is no doubt in my mind that the students are going to love it! Many of our students do not ever get to purchase a NEW book," said Strickland.

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The Power of Coordinated Resources

As the peak of hurricane season in North Carolina approaches, South River EMC remains focused on grid resiliency and preparedness efforts. This year-round effort to limit power outages and recover quickly from those that do occur includes conventional efforts like tree-trimming to keep limbs away from powerlines, as well as efforts that incorporate advanced technologies and support our commitment to power a brighter future. As technology evolves, we see new energy assets added throughout the electric system in households, businesses, substations and elsewhere – often called “distributed energy resources” – as an exciting opportunity. These resources can be large enough to power several homes, like a microgrid or utility-scale solar farm, or as small as a smart thermostat inside your home. By working with electric co-ops statewide and other partners, South River EMC is exploring opportunities to add flexible local resources to our energy toolbox and coordinate them to work together across the grid. By integrating and synchronizing these assets, we can maximize the benefits to the grid and all cooperative members.

Resilience is one important benefit. Integrating grid resources closer to homes and communities provides local power options, while also diversifying the resources we can call on to provide power. Statewide, electric cooperatives have integrated five micro-

grids that can power local areas when needed and also support the grid as a whole. While new resources support resiliency, we are proud that the grid today is already very reliable. Our reliability rate is 99 percent, and we will continue working to maintain and improve even further.

Coordinating distributed energy

resources also supports our sustainability goals. Take solar power: It can present a challenge because it is only available when the sun is shining, but our members need reliable power all the time. By pairing solar generation with flexible resources such as batteries, South River EMC and our power supplier can make intermittent generation sources into stronger grid assets while also increasing sustainability.

Managing costs to keep them as low as possible is always part of South River EMC’s mission. As prices for new energy resources are decreasing, the economics for implementation are improving. And, by deploying distributed resources in a coordinated way, we can use the grid more efficiently and better manage energy distribution. This helps us save, not only by reducing demand for power when energy consumption peaks and wholesale electricity is most expensive, but also by delaying or even avoiding the need to invest in expensive new infrastructure, like substations. Because cooperatives like South



MESSAGE FROM CEO CHRIS M. SPEARS

River EMC are not-for-profit and provide power near cost, savings directly benefit co-op members.

These technologies also have created opportunities for our members, like you, to partner with us to achieve shared value like when you participate in smart thermostat programs, such as Connect to Save. This program enables you to purchase a Nest or ecobee smart thermostat at a significantly reduced rate, in exchange for helping us to use less energy during peak times. This provides a benefit to you and the Cooperative. The Carina water heater device works under the same premise. You can have a Carina water heater device installed for free and we will be able to control it during peak times. The Carina device will make sure you don’t run out of hot water and it will send a message when it indicates that you might have a problem developing in your water heater – this is a win-win for everyone.

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"I try to have new books in the library for them to check out, but obviously they have to return those. I think they are going to be thrilled that they actually get to take the book home and KEEP it!"

So, Strickland wrote an Operation Round Up grant application for the Bookworm and the initial books for the machine.

"It is no secret that books open children's minds and imaginations and this project will help create readers and thinkers," she said. "By helping our students get quality literature in their hands, we will help young minds grow through books and gain better understanding of skills and standards that are taught. Our students are constantly asking for particular and exciting books to read; they just can't seem to get enough, which is an excellent problem to have!"

Books are purchased with gold coins, called inchy golden tokens, and there is already a plan for how students will earn these tokens.

"Our plan is to incorporate the gold coins and Bookworm machine into our Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), as well as reading goals. Currently, students earn "tickets" for modeling good behavior and going above and beyond expectations," said Strickland. "Each week the tickets earned are put into a drawing. There are several winners and they receive a prize. We think a gold coin to visit the Bookworm would be an excellent prize!"



Strickland also has a plan to incorporate the Bookworms into students' reading goals for the accelerated reader program.

The Bookworm will hold approximately 250 books, and those were carefully researched.

"I knew I had to get cost efficient books because the machine is going to have to be refilled. I also knew I had to get books the students would be interested in and actually want to take home," said Strickland. "I also had no idea how some of the books would actually fit in the machine."

However, upon turning to the Facebook group, she found that Scholastic has a program that provides book for the Bookworm.

Although the vending machine delivery was delayed, both teachers and students are eagerly anticipating its arrival.

In her grant application, Strickland also requested some updated reading material for the library.

"North Carolina has guidelines for libraries and their collections," she said. "Currently, the average copyright date of books in a school media center should be 2008 to be considered 'at level.'"

Hargrove's library collection average is about 2009, a year above the minimum, and as standards update, Strickland is trying to make sure the media center is keeping up.

While this is not Hargrove Elementary, or indeed Strickland's first grant request that was funded, it was different this time.

"I was absolutely ecstatic," Strickland said. "Although I have received Operation Round Up grants in the past, somehow this one was extra special due to the Bookworm. I could not be more excited to share this amazing machine with my students!"

With a majority of students that love to read, there are still those that just do not and Strickland is trying to find books all students will enjoy.

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An added bonus is that you receive a \$50 incentive for each thermostat and water heater device enrolled after each year that you participate in the Connect to Save program.

Electric vehicles, or EVs, also provide a big opportunity. Not only do EV drivers benefit from lower costs, but also reduced maintenance, better performance, zero tailpipe emissions and more convenience. Additionally, by charging at home

overnight, when most people are not using large amounts of power, EV drivers can help the co-op can utilize its infrastructure more efficiently, which benefits all members.

By adopting proven technologies and deploying distributed resources at scale, South River EMC can provide many benefits to members: added resilience, enhanced sustainability through renewable generation, optimization of the grid, cost savings, and new services for members, to name a few. We see these

benefits compounding over time, especially as more of our members, from large commercial businesses to residents interested in a smart thermostat, decide to participate with us in building the grid of the future.

This storm season and beyond, as part of our Brighter Future vision, you can count on South River EMC to continue to take steps to enhance grid resiliency and deploy resources that bring real benefits to members.

BRIGHT DAYS FOR BRIGHT IDEAS

As we enter the dog days of summer, you and your family might be preparing for a return to school.

Teachers are also preparing, they have to meet the learning needs of their students and many are finding innovative ways to connect.

Planning for the new school year and engaging students and their different learning styles takes preparation, planning, and funding.

And more often than not, it comes to teachers to spend their own money on classroom materials.

South River EMC has an option to get classrooms ready. Bright Ideas is a grant program for teachers in public, K-12 schools, who have bright, innovative

classroom-based ideas.

In the past few years, the Co-operative has awarded over \$50,000 per year to local educators.

Since 1994, North Carolina's electric cooperatives have awarded \$13.6 million in grants to 2.7 million students.

Grants can be written for any

amount up to \$2,500 and for any subject.

If you are a local educator with an innovative idea, apply at ncbrightideas.com by Sept. 15. If you submit your application by Aug. 16, you may be eligible to win a \$100 Visa gift card.

For questions, visit sremc.com/bright-ideas.



RAISE A FLAG, HONOR A HERO.



Fields of Honor is your opportunity to personally salute a member of the military this Veteran's Day.

From November 5-14, 400 American flags will be flown on the lawn at each South River EMC office. Every 3' x 5' flag will carry a tag bearing the name of an honoree. When you submit the name, or names, of current, former, or deceased members of the military, we ask that you include a donation in any amount. Proceeds will go to local veterans' organizations.



**South River Electric
Membership Corporation**

A Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

To sponsor one or more Fields of Honor flags,
visit [SREMC.com/field-honor](https://www.sremc.com/field-honor) or call **(910) 892-8071**.

Sponsorships must be made by October 1st.



HERO Homes, Energy Star Appliances, Water Heater Savings.

Energy Star Appliances Save

Energy Star appliances use less water and energy and they've undergone testing in order to carry the Energy Star logo.

South River EMC offers a rebate on the following Energy Star certified items: refrigerators, washers and dryers, and dehumidifiers.

For details visit sremc.com/energy-star-appliances or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.

HERO: A Home Of Serious Savings

The high efficiency residential option, or HERO, home is 30 percent more energy efficient than homes built to North Carolina building code. The HERO code requires slightly better insulation, fenestration, air seal-

ing, equipment, and lighting to deliver savings.

There are two ways to achieve these savings, by the straightforward prescriptive path, or the more flexible performance path.

Contractors and members are eligible for rebates for purchasing or building a HERO home. Please visit sremc.com/hero-program or call 910.892-8071 x 2153.

Water Heating: How One Change, Changes Costs

A water heater contributes to your energy costs, some 18 percent each month. And not every water heater works the same, with certain ones fitting your lifestyle better than others.

You might have a conventional electric water heater, when a tankless, solar, or heat pump

water heater, HPWH, could help you save.

A solar water heater uses the sun to heat water, while an HPWH moves heat instead of creating it, they are 2-3 times more efficient than standard water heaters.

South River EMC offers rebates on solar and heat pump water heaters. For details visit sremc.com/energy-efficient-water-heating or call 910.892.8071 x 2123.

Keep That Heat Outside

It's still warm, but don't let the heat in, make improvements to keep your home comfortable.

This could be done with new

or refreshed insulation, or by weather stripping and caulking, and all the work could net you a rebate.

Details on the work can be found at sremc.com/insulation-weatherization or by calling 910.892.8071 x 2222.

Rebate Offered For High Efficiency Heat Pumps

Heating and cooling your home can be costly, but there are several reasons why. Heat pump size, age, efficiency, maintenance, and thermostat settings all contribute to your heating and cooling costs.

Knowing this, and purchasing a high efficiency unit might be

the start to cutting costs.

You don't just have to consider air source heat pumps, though they are the most affordable.

There is also the geothermal heat pump, better for new construction consideration, and ductless mini split systems,

better for rooms not connected to your existing heating and cooling system.

For details, as well as information on the rebates offered at South River EMC, visit sremc.com/energy-star-heating-cooling or call 910.892.8071 x 2222.

End Of Season Pool Savings

Pool season really isn't over until the temperature cools, or until you get tired of cleaning the pool, whichever comes first.

Whatever the case, after Labor Day you might find some good deals on pool pumps as inven-

tory needs to be moved, and a new pump could help you save.

If your pool has to have a pump, don't let it be a single speed, one speed for all pool activities. A variable or two-speed pump gives you the ability to set

different flow rates for different activities, which saves electricity, water AND money. For details visit sremc.com/pool-pumps or call 910.892.8071 x 2153.



Your pool might not be this big, but savings are still there.

We Can Help You with Surge Suppression & Protection

As we usually see more thunderstorm activity during the summer, power surges become more of a threat to our homes and electronics. We have a few products that can offer you some protection and peace of mind when the thunderstorms roll in. First, let's talk about what a power surge is, and a little bit about what a surge is not.

A power surge is a momentary, rapid increase in voltage on the electric grid that travels down the line. We work to maintain a voltage level of around 240 to 245 volts to the average service, but an indirect lightning strike can cause a power surge, which increases voltage exponentially for a very brief moment.

These surges occur most often when lightning makes contact down the line from your home, hitting a pole or other utility structure. In fact, around 95 percent of all surge-related damage is attributable to indirect lightning strikes.

South River EMC installs lightning arrestors on the utility lines to prevent lightening from traveling and causing damage, but this system isn't perfect, which is why it's a good idea to

purchase surge suppressors to help protect your appliances and electronics.

A power surge is not a "blink". A blink is a momentary interruption in service caused by normal equipment operation. Devices like reclosers operate to prevent wildlife and vegetation that temporarily come into contact with the lines from knocking out power to large areas. These devices stop the flow of electricity on the lines momentarily, hopefully giving the fault time to clear.

We can help protect you from surges by offering three great products. The first and most popular, is the SS-320-A Whole House Protector. We install this surge suppressor behind the meter and it's designed to lessen the intensity of any surge coming over the line to 1/10th is original size, before it enters your home. The cost is \$135 plus tax; installation included. To be clear, this device is only effective if the surge comes over the power line, so you are still vulnerable at the phone, cable, and internet service entrances.

It's recommended that you pair the Whole House Pro-



Advise Guy Aaron Jackson

tector with individual outlet suppressors in order to lessen the intensity of the surge that makes it through the primary suppressor. For this reason, we offer the US 1206 6-outlet suppressor for interior outlets. This is a heavy-duty outlet suppressor with telephone, data, and video pass-through protection at a cost of \$90. Lastly, we've partnered with Utility Shield to offer a surge protection specific plan that will cover appliances and electronics damaged by surges for a flat fee of \$9.95 + tax per month.

To speak with someone about surge protection, just reach out to the Advise Guys at advise-guys@sremc.com or check out our website, sremc.com/surge-protection, for more information.

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