Loyal connections to community

Loyalty is a prized virtue — to country, family, even the schools we attend. We keep those ties strong throughout our lives, myself included.

We at Fayetteville Public Utilities also have loyalties to the customers and communities we serve. We have deep connections here because Fayetteville/Lincoln County is our home, and you are our neighbor.

When you signed up for service with FPU, you became our customer, but not only a customer — you became a part of who we are as your utility provider.

With this in mind, we care about improving the quality of life in the areas we serve. From sponsoring youth programs and assisting with community-wide events to taking donations for the local food bank and more, FPU invests in the places where you live and work.

FPU is a community-minded utility. We share the same concerns you have about rising costs along with improvement and expansion of FPU services to rural areas of Lincoln County. In each of these areas, we weigh all possibilities to meet our customers’ needs.

Everything we provide benefits the folks who live and work in our community. FPU doesn’t exist to make profits for distant investors on Wall Street. We exist to provide you with safe, reliable and affordable utility services — and we do so in a way that makes things better for future generations. Because FPU operates on a not-for-profit basis, we have no need to increase revenues above what it takes to run our business in a financially sound manner. This structure helps keep your electric, water, wastewater, natural gas and FPU telecom rates affordable.

We take our jobs seriously, but we also take our community roles seriously. That’s why we offer scholarships to college-bound students through our Student Utility Board program and send high school juniors to Washington, D.C., every summer to learn about history and government. FPU also participates annually in the local Relay for Life and Heart Walk events to show our support for the residents of our community.

We work with local businesses and the industrial development board to keep utility rates affordable for existing and prospective businesses to enhance community growth.

FPU also offers a variety of customer service programs for residential and commercial customers to help them get the most from their utility dollars. We want you to take advantage of our energy and water efficiency programs so you see where your utility dollars are spent in your home and have better control over how much energy and water you use each month.

Helping our customers is not only our duty, it’s our privilege.

We don’t participate in these activities simply because it’s a nice gesture or because it’s the right thing to do. We do it because we remain loyal to our customers, our neighbors, our home — and it is our mission to make life better in the areas we serve.

Britt Dye
CEO and General Manager
Work projects underway for fiscal year 2014

System improvement plans for fiscal year 2014 were approved by the Fayetteville Public Utilities board of directors to continue enhancing our utility system. The new budget year for FPU began July 1, and already some of the following plans have begun.

Over the next 10 months, FPU’s electric crews plan to upgrade 1.5 miles of conductor along Brogan Avenue and a total of 3.4 miles of line in the Flintville area with two separate system upgrades. We plan to continue upgrading the Hamilton Substation and begin upgrades for the 46-kilovolt switches outside the Petersburg Substation. FPU and the Tennessee Valley Authority will work on voltage reduction and load control for the entire electric system.

Our Natural Gas Department will acquire an additional 164 customers with the proposed purchase of the Ardmore gas line. Included with this purchase are 18.2 miles of gas main that FPU will now maintain. The gas department will be upgrading the Franke Boulevard and Hedgemont Avenue stations and completing this year’s phase of system expansion in the Howell Hill area.

System improvements also include replacing 1,400 feet of ductile iron pipe with 4-inch steel pipe in the Cotton Mill Road area. Our meter change-out program continues with plans to upgrade 700 meters with the remote meter reading technology.

In October, the new Holman Hill Water Tank will be complete. (You can read about the project in the following article.) FPU also has plans to replace the existing 100,000-gallon Howell Water Tank with a new, 320,000-gallon tank this fiscal year. The Howell Water Tank serves 1,196 customers who live along the Lewisburg and Shelbyville highways and in the communities of Howell, Petersburg, Belleville and Mimosa. The water from the Howell tank is shared by customers of FPU, the Lincoln County Board of Public Utilities and Petersburg Water System.

Upgrades continue on the Tanyard Branch, Laten Bottom, Pitts, Radio City and Winchester Highway sewer lines and also at the Mullins Lift Station and Howell Booster Pump Station. Low-pressure sewer lines are being installed in many areas within the Fayetteville city limits that are not currently served with public sanitary sewer.

In this fiscal year, we will begin the initial stages of construction of FPU’s new water treatment facility on Eldad Road, which will replace the existing operation. The new treatment plant will include a state-of-the-art membrane water filtration process, new monitoring systems and more to improve water quality.

The FPU Water and Wastewater Departments have received more than $9 million in low-interest loans and grant money to aid in these system improvements for fiscal year 2014.

The FPU Telecom Department is planning an upgrade of the headend facility located at our main office, which is the technology hub of our cable TV and Internet services. In addition to this upgrade, the department will be scheduling new construction and adding new high-definition receivers at the headend.

In the new fiscal year, we will also continue to address system redundancy and alternate feeds for all departments to ensure uninterrupted service while looking at cost-effective ways to extend service lines to more customers.

As demands for faster, better service continue, FPU will continue to put in place those upgrades necessary to meet and surpass customer need. It is our goal to always offer the best in utility service. We believe we have a system that is second to none.

Holman Hill Water Tank nearing completion

Fayetteville Public Utilities’ project to replace the Holman Hill Water Tank is well underway and on schedule. The new 1.3 million-gallon water tank replaces the 1 million-gallon tank that had been in service at the location for more than 30 years.

Work began in March as contractors from Crom Corp. of Gainesville, Fla., began demolition of the existing Holman Hill Water Tank in order to construct FPU’s new 1.3 million-gallon water tank at the same location. During the construction process, customers who were supplied water from Holman Hill are receiving water from a 300,000-gallon tank that remains in service at Holman Hill and from the Timberlake tank on Eldad Road. The 300,000-gallon water tank at Holman Hill was also left in service to provide adequate fire protection to area residents during the construction process.

The new Holman Hill tank stretches 90 feet in diameter and is 28 feet tall.

“The new Holman Hill Water Tank is designed and coordinated with our distribution system,” says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye, “and it is hydraulically matched to the Timberlake Water Tank so that the two water storage tanks will work together to manage the largest capacity of Fayetteville’s water storage.”

The new water tank is also a “green” project in that it uses about 80 percent less steel and 40 percent less concrete than a traditional cast-in-place concrete design to contain an

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Three local students joined more than 130 young leaders for a tour of our nation’s capital in June as part of the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Youth Tour to Washington, D.C.

Samantha Tucker of Lincoln County High School, Liz Gurley of Fayetteville High School and Carrie Rozar of Riverside Christian Academy were rewarded with the weeklong tour of Washington for writing winning short stories titled “Electric Cooperatives: Powering Your Community.” In their stories, they described how locally-owned, locally-operated electric companies provide valuable community-building support in addition to reliable and affordable electric service, which help our rural communities grow.

The Youth Tour is a joint effort of local electric systems such as Fayetteville Public Utilities, the Tennessee Electric Cooperative Association and the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association. Each school year, FPU sponsors a short story contest for high school juniors. Winners are awarded trips to our nation’s capital the following June as part of the Washington Youth Tour. This year’s trip ran June 14-20 and included meetings with elected officials, visits to Washington’s popular tourist stops and time to meet tour winners representing other electric co-ops across the state and U.S.

“Washington is an incredible place to visit,” said FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. “These young ladies have been given an opportunity that only few receive in their lifetimes, and to meet with their state representatives while visiting the capital is admirable.”

On the tour, students saw famous sites they’ve learned about in school, including the White House and memorials to past presidents Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt as well as monuments honoring the sacrifices of veterans of World War II and the Vietnam and Korean conflicts. Students also had time to visit the museums of the Smithsonian Institution to learn more about science, history and art.

Other memorable stops included homes of former presidents — George Washington’s Mount Vernon...
and Jefferson’s Monticello — a performance of “Shear Madness” at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and tours of the famed Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum and the National Museum of Crime and Punishment.

The Youth Tour also included a solemn and sobering visit to Arlington National Cemetery, where the group laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns.

No trip to Washington, D.C., would be complete without a lesson or two in government and civics. The group was welcomed to the U.S. Capitol by Reps. Marsha Blackburn and Stephen Fincher, and their staff members treated students to a special after-hours, VIP guided tour. Students also met Tennessee Sens. Lamar Alexander and Bob Corker as well as former Tennessee Gov. Phil Bredesen outside the Capitol for photos. Rep. Scott DeJarlais also spent some time with students from his district outside the Capitol and posed for photos.

During the week, students learned about leadership from renowned presenters at the National Youth Day with more than 1,500 students in attendance.

“This year’s tour of Washington, D.C., was truly an amazing experience for the students,” said Gina Warren, FPU’s public information specialist and tour advisor. “They made new friendships and memories that will have a lasting impact on their futures.”

Samantha is the daughter of Sammy and Nickie Tucker, Liz is the daughter of Lenace and David Vaughn and Heath Gurley and Carrie is the daughter of Mike and Dianne Rozar.

Clockwise from top left are Carrie, Liz and Samantha at Thomas Jefferson’s home, Monticello. At Madame Tussaud’s Wax Museum, Samantha tells a lifelike wax figure of professional golfer Tiger Woods that he missed by inches. While visiting the Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial, the girls learn of his legacy. Samantha, Liz, Carrie and Gina Warren of FPU tour the Washington National Cathedral.

FPU teaches electric safety at Farm Safety Day

The annual Farm Safety Day brought some 400 fourth-graders to the Lincoln County Fairgrounds for a fun-filled day of learning about safety in many areas — from using farm equipment and electricity to driving all-terrain vehicles and boats.

Fayetteville Public Utilities has been a part of the Farm Safety Day event for many years. This year, FPU’s Ron Thomas led the electric safety demonstration using the “Danger — High Voltage” program. He was assisted by a young 4-H member, Evan Buck.

The high-voltage demonstration includes safety warnings about carrying ladders too close to power lines and climbing trees and flying kites near power lines. At the end of the show, students are surprised when the demo house bursts into flames and smoke as a TV antenna falls onto the power lines.

Each year, FPU is asked to assist with a group photo of all the Farm Safety Day participants and with meal preparation for the workers and volunteers. FPU’s Lewis Steelman, Dale Moran and Don Counts supplied the bucket truck and photography for the photo while Phillip Shelton helped grill some 100 hamburgers.

“Farm Safety Day is a great opportunity for FPU to teach these young students about electrical safety,” says FPU CEO and General Manager Britt Dye. “This type of safety training covers many interests and is very important to the students.”
equal volume of water. FPU chose this type of concrete structure partly due to the positive local impact on the economy. Because Crom Corp. builds the tank on site, many raw materials and services are purchased from local suppliers.

“The 1.3 million-gallon tank will be wrapped with more than 26 miles of prestressed wire, enough to stretch from Fayetteville to Huntsville,” says Brett Bohannon, Crom project manager.

Other special features of the new water tank include:

- Prestressed concrete, rods, cables and high-strength wire
- Solar power mixing system to keep stored water fresh with its 24/7 mixing capability
- Steel shell diaphragm to make the core wall watertight
- Sampling points to enable easy measurement and testing of water quality throughout the tank levels
- Up-to-date safety features that include safety rails for exterior ladder and rooftop
- Connected to FPU’s SCADA system for constant monitoring
- Improved control valves

“FPU is also installing fiber service to Holman, Timberlake, Industrial Park and Howell water tanks to improve monitoring of water levels and system operations at the main office and water treatment plant,” says Dye. “Fiber is also being connected to some of FPU’s pump stations and booster stations.”

Since 1953, Crom Corporation has designed and constructed more than 4,300 tanks for water storage and wastewater treatment.

The dome-shaped roof was added in recent weeks to complete the outer structure of the tank. The roof spans 90 feet with no intermediate support, yet it is only 3 inches thick. Even more impressive is that it will be capable of supporting a total distributed load of more than 66 tons.

Construction is expected to be complete in October.

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**Stealing electricity is a crime**

Stealing electricity is a crime that most people do not think about. There are no newspaper headlines about thieves caught with truckloads of kilowatt-hours, yet every day, somewhere in every electric system, someone steals electricity. Stealing from an electric utility is the same as stealing from your neighbor since each is a customer of that electric utility.

“Theft of service” is the legal term for stealing electricity and other utilities such as gas, water and telecommunications services. Theft of service is unique in that you will not catch a person “holding the goods,” so to speak. Fortunately, Tennessee law specifically addresses this type of crime to provide the necessary tools to prosecute those who choose to steal.

Under Tennessee law, utilities do not have to witness or apprehend a thief in the act of stealing. The presence of physical evidence of theft along with the presumed beneficiary of the stolen service are all that is required to make a case for theft of service. Successful prosecutions can recover up to three times the cost of the energy that was stolen, related expenses such as damaged equipment and labor associated with the investigation.

Typically, there is plenty of physical evidence to alert a utility employee that an installation needs to be investigated. In other instances, utility customers alert the utility office that neighbors are obtaining electricity illegally. Either way, when an illegal service connection is removed, all of us benefit.

Over the years, Fayetteville Public Utilities has discovered several instances of theft accomplished in different ways. Regardless of the method used to steal electricity, there is a significant risk of being harmed or fatally injured while tampering with the electric system. FPU works closely with local law enforcement agencies, both city and county, to prosecute theft of service.

The goal is to save you money and prevent someone from getting hurt.