



## Southern Pine's member focus remains steadfast

"When you're finished changing, you're finished," said Ben Franklin.

Today, we spend a lot of time talking about change and the need to be able to adapt. After all, change can be good. For many of us, change is hard. As we move into a season of change at Southern Pine, I hope we can see past the "change" itself, and focus on opportunities for real improvements and better connections.

I realize perspectives differ on this. Let me tell you a personal story about differing perspectives on change.

Frequently over the last year or so, my father would complain about how old their lawn mower was and how often he was having to repair it. It was time for a new mower. I thought I was doing him a favor when I bragged how much more efficient my new zero-turn mower was compared to the old tractor-style lawn mower he and Momma still owned.

I was happy when I learned he had purchased a new zero-turn mower, and I enjoyed hearing about how well he thought it performed. The problem with this change has to do with Momma. You see, ever since my brother and I left home for the real world, Momma cut the grass. When I had kids of my own, she would take joy in riding her grandchildren around the yard on her little green tractor as if it were a carnival ride.

Momma enjoyed cutting grass on "her" mower, and I was eager to hear how much she liked the new zero-turn mower that replaced her old one.

When I asked her about it, she said with a terse tone, "I told your Daddy when he was looking at that thing that if he wanted to buy one of those zero-turn contraptions, HE would be the one cutting the grass!"

No wonder Daddy was able to tell me so much about how fast and smooth that new mower was; he was the one getting all the seat time now!

When I asked Momma why she took such a hard line with Daddy on this, she told me she simply does not like change and that change scares her. She just wanted a newer version of what she was comfortable with, and she didn't want to be forced into a big change.

When I think about big, often disturbing changes at our cooperative, I'm thinking of innovative technology, faster communications and the turbulence of the Digital Age. Also, Southern Pine's updated name and logo come to mind, and let's not forget changes in leadership and the new building project under way in Taylorsville.

Although these transformations are exciting for some, they are unsettling for others in our cooperative

family. The story about my mother's loss of her little green tractor gives me reason for pause and reminds me of the anxiety some have when change occurs.

New technology continues to provide real improvements for some while causing challenges for others. Faster communication systems are great for connecting but modern expectations for instant response stir frustrations on both sides. Ever had someone ask you why you haven't responded to the text message sent five minutes ago? The abundance of information is great for those who know where to find it, but once you do, it can be overwhelming.

I love our cooperative's new logo, but I realize some people hold onto the tradition and legacy of the old one. I can't wait to get in the new building, but I know some of our people will miss the office they've grown fond of over the years.

Quite frequently, I mention the need to focus on the connection we have with our people. The silly story about Momma's little green tractor serves as a real reminder for me that people perceive change differently, and we need to keep this in mind. We don't want our ambitious efforts to innovate and improve to hinder our efforts to strengthen people-on-people connections. I realize more than ever that in a world filled with change, we will have to try to understand how it affects our people, both members and employees.

Contact Southern Pine Electric President and CEO Jason S. Siegfried at [jsiegfried@southernpine.coop](mailto:jsiegfried@southernpine.coop).



Jason S. Siegfried  
President/CEO

## Clearing a path for electricity

Southern Pine Electric strives to provide the safest and most reliable electric service possible. One very important way to help achieve this is a vegetation management or right-of-way clearing program.

Trees are one of the leading causes for service interruptions and can be a major hazard to utility personnel, as well as the general public. Clearing these rights-of-way is very important to keeping our electric system reliable and safe.

We refer to right-of-way as the land beneath or beside the electric lines that an electric cooperative has an easement to maintain and clear. Typically, these easements range from 15 to 20 feet on either side of the primary electric lines.

We have several methods in which we maintain these lines on a regular basis. Right-of-way can be cleared by cutting, trimming, or using environmentally safe herbicide.

- Each district has a right-of-way crew that assists daily with cutting dead or dangerous trees helping to prevent electric service interruptions. They trim limbs and brush that grow close to the line that could cause electric lines to blink or result in a service interruption. These crews also assist with trimming our new service projects and help with storm damage restoration.

- Our strategy is to maintain electric lines on a consistent, planned trimming/cutting cycle. Approximately every four years, we have contract crews that use larger side trimming units to trim all the primary electric lines within a substation. They also use bucket

trucks to assist with this process to access the areas in or around yards. Once the crews trim vegetation, they are under contract to collect limbs or brush left on the ground within five days.

- We also use an environmentally safe herbicide program to control the ground floors of our power line rights-of-way. This helps prevent the brushy undergrowth from encroaching on our electric lines and allows for easier access to our crews during outage restoration.

Right-of-way or vegetation management programs are critical to ensuring that we provide members with the most reliable electric service possible. Staying ahead of electric service interruptions is very important to us. With over 10,000 miles of power lines spanning 11 counties, this is a continuous cycle for us.

Remember to contact Southern Pine Electric first if you choose to trim or remove trees near any electric service line. If you see a tree touching electric lines and sparking or any other hazardous tree condition, contact us at 1-800-231-5240 to report the condition.

*Chad Lewis is Southern Pine Electric's vice president of operations. Contact him at [clewis@southernpine.coop](mailto:clewis@southernpine.coop).*



By Chad Lewis



Retired General Manager Donald L. Jordan, left, receives a framed resolution passed by the Mississippi Legislature from President/CEO Jason S. Siegfried. Jordan was presented the resolution and one approved by the Southern Pine Electric board of directors at an all-employee meeting May 16.

## Donald L. Jordan honored for service to Southern Pine

The board of directors of Southern Pine Electric recently enacted a resolution commending Donald L. Jordan for exemplary service to the cooperative as general manager for the past 30 years and congratulating him on his retirement.

Through many challenges from Mother Nature, political unrest, takeover attempts and economic struggles, Mr. Jordan's wise counsel and strength established Southern Pine as one of the strongest cooperatives in the United States.

During his tenure, Southern Pine opened four district offices, one branch location and will complete construction of a new campus in 2018 that will include a warehouse, general service building, district office and a new headquarters building located in Taylorsville.

Signifying the many years of dedicated, faithful service by Mr. Jordan to Southern Pine Electric and its members, the resolution announced the intention of naming the new headquarters building The Jordan Building, with a monument in his honor to be erected as part of the permanent structure of the building.

Mr. Jordan has devoted his life to serving others through his mission to make life better for his family, Southern Pine and the state of Mississippi. The Mississippi Legislature recognized his dedication and commitment earlier this year when they unanimously approved a resolution honoring him. Senate Concurrent Resolution 656 recognized his distinguished civic and utility leadership across the nation and the state, as well as his work to bring economic development to Mississippi. Lt. Gov. Tate Reeves, Speaker Phillip Gunn and Senate Pro Tem Terry C. Burton signed the resolution.

The first official event in The Jordan Building will be a reception hosted by the board of directors and employees of Southern Pine celebrating his life, accomplishments and retirement.

Jason S. Siegfried, the newly named president and CEO of Southern Pine Electric, presented copies of both resolutions to Mr. Jordan during an all-employee meeting on May 16. As a show of their thanks, love for and support of Mr. Jordan, the employees honored him with a standing ovation during the meeting.



Southern Pine Electric's James Barnes trims trees along right-of-way in Smith County.

### New Twitter username

We've changed our Twitter username to @MySouthernPine. We hope you'll follow us and keep up to date with outages, energy efficiency tips and other features. And don't forget our Facebook page: [facebook.com/MySouthernPine](https://www.facebook.com/MySouthernPine).



### Holiday closing

All Southern Pine offices will be closed

#### Tuesday, July 4

as we celebrate Independence Day. Dispatchers will be on duty. Report outages at 1-800-231-5240. Have a safe holiday!

### Energy tip

Periodically inspect your dryer vent to ensure it is not blocked. This will save energy and may prevent a fire. Manufacturers recommend using rigid venting material, not plastic vents that may collapse and cause blockages.