



Southern Pine's board is elected by the members to serve and protect the members, the infrastructure and the assets of the cooperative

August is a very busy month at Southern Pine. In addition to the day-to-day demands and projects, work on the annual membership meeting to be held on Thursday, Nov. 8, 2018, at 2:00 p.m. is well underway. Along with numerous activities and events that begin at noon, the membership meeting allows us an opportunity to update members on the status of the cooperative, and we hold director elections each year.

2017 and 2018 have been particularly demanding at Southern Pine as we have devoted numerous hours to historical research and interviews in preparation for our 80-year history book, which will be available at the annual meeting. Meetings with members, elected officials and retired employees have solidified the importance of the past eight decades in the lives of thousands of people across Southern Pine's service territory. Stories have resonated with the determination of employees to take care of themselves, their neighbors and friends as they fought to bring electricity to our part of the state.

One story that seems to exemplify the resolve of people some 80 years ago is that of Mr. Tom White, one of Southern Pine's first board members from Simpson County. Mr. White did not own a car, which was not unusual in the late 1930s and early '40s. The fact that he didn't have a vehicle did not deter his determination to serve the people of South Mississippi. Arising early on board meeting day, he walked from his home down a rural country road to the Village of Magee (now a city), where he caught a ride with someone or caught one of the first buses that ran sporadically over various routes. Arriving in Taylorsville, he had to wait several hours until it was time for the board meeting. After the meeting, he hitched a ride back to Magee and then had to walk home.

This type of determination is the very foundation our cooperative was built upon. Today, each of our 13 directors face issues that would be foreign to the first board. Bombarded with calls, emails and director education information, they are required to shuffle

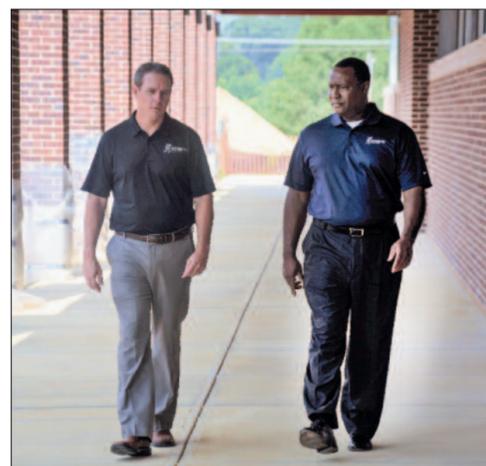
through mountains of paperwork to find the important information they need to make informed decisions while disregarding the rest. Legislative mandates must be monitored, supported or squashed to protect not only the cooperative but its members from unnecessary environmental restrictions that have the potential to cause huge rate increases. Fiduciary responsibility places a great burden on the shoulders of each director required to understand not only the fundamental business practices of Southern Pine but also that of our generating facility, the statewide cooperative and our national organization.

Through the individual and joint efforts of our board members, we've been able to adapt to industry changes and make upgrades to our infrastructure. More important, our board members care about people, our communities and state. The issues that face a single mom struggling to pay her power bill or the needs of a local school are the same issues that face our board. Any policy they implement, change or revoke will affect them and their families too.

Our mission statement is more than a group of well-meaning words; we genuinely care about the elderly member who lives alone and depends on us not only for air-conditioning and heat but also for security and medical equipment.

In addition to the employees, our directors monitor outages and fully realize the toll that harsh Mississippi weather can take on a family. If the lights are out, they know about it.

As we prepare for the annual membership meeting



Top: Board director Fountaine McNair, right, chats with Chad Lewis, vice president of operations for Southern Pine Electric. Above: Billy Berry, left, board director for Simpson County, and Charles Lowe, right, board director for Copiah County, visit with Southern Pine Electric employee Nathan Hudson.

on Nov. 8, we encourage all members to attend this important event to meet your board members and learn about the many services available to you. For 80 years, our directors and employees have worked hard to serve you and are committed to Bringing the Power with even better service for the next 80 years.



Jason S. Siegfried
President/CEO

Visit to nation's capital inspires Youth Tour students



Above: R.J. and Mary visit the National Cathedral. Below: At the Marine Corps War Memorial, they see the massive bronze statue depicting the iconic moment when Marines raised the American flag on the island of Iwo Jima during World War II.



Above: The students stop for a photo in front of the Air Force Memorial.



R.J. and Mary visit Rep. Gregg Harper in his Washington, D.C., office.



Each year, Southern Pine Electric sponsors two high school juniors on a tour of the nation's capital. The Electric Cooperative Youth Tour has brought high school students to Washington, D.C., every June since the late 1950s, and more than 50,000 students from across America have experienced this unique opportunity. The Electric Cooperatives of Mississippi (ECM) has participated in the program for 32 years.

The tour gives the students an up-close view of the political process on a national level and connects them with like-minded students from across the state and nation. The relationships made on Youth Tour have proven to be beneficial throughout their lives.

The Youth Tour is supported locally by Southern Pine Electric and organized statewide by ECM and nationally by the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA). More than 1,800 students from 42 states participate annually.

This year, Mary Crane and Robert Jonathan (R.J.) represented Southern Pine Electric. They joined 73 of Mississippi's brightest juniors on the tour. They were chosen through an application and interview process. Mary is the daughter of Amy and John Crane of Pearl and will be a senior at Pearl High School.

R.J. will be a senior at Stringer Attendance School and is the son of Robin Holifield of Stringer.

On the week-long trip, the students visited historical and cultural sites and a variety of monuments and memorials, such as the World War II Memorial, Korean War Memorial, FDR Memorial, Lincoln Memorial, Air Force Memorial, Jefferson Memorial and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

"Our day on Capitol Hill was, without a doubt, one of the best days of my life. Simply being in the presence of so many respected people was an extremely humbling experience that I pray I never forget," Mary said.

One of the first stops on the tour was the Marine Corps War Memorial, informally known as the Iwo Jima,

followed by visits to other monuments and memorials.

The students visited numerous museums such as the Newseum, a seven-floor, interactive museum dedicated to First Amendment rights and journalism throughout American history. A new addition to the tour this year was a visit to the Holocaust Museum. The museum is a somber reflection of those who were lost during the Nazi regime. They also spent a day touring the Smithsonian Museums of Air and Space, American History, Natural History and the National Gallery of Art.

Another popular event of the tour was a Major League Baseball game at Nationals Park. The students watched as the Washington Nationals took on the San Francisco Giants.

After a drive down Massachusetts Avenue, unofficially known as Embassy Row, the students enjoyed a guided tour of the Washington National Cathedral, the second-largest cathedral in the U.S.

In addition to sightseeing, the students spent a day on Capitol Hill, which began with a special tour of the U.S. House Floor graciously hosted by Rep. Gregg Harper. While in the Capitol building, the students enjoyed a panoramic view of Washington, D.C., from the House Speaker's balcony. Many of the students were able to meet House Speaker Paul Ryan and Rep. Kevin McCarthy (CA). McCarthy spoke to the group after a news interview in the Capitol Rotunda.

After the tour, Mary and R.J. joined a smaller group to visit with Rep. Harper in his Washington office. The congressman spoke to the group about what it takes to be a leader and the importance of setting goals and striving to achieve them.

During the visit to Capitol Hill, students also had the opportunity to meet with Sen. Roger Wicker and Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith.

"I loved the trip and any true American should be overwhelmed with a strong sense of patriotism and pride in their county, its history, and the men and women who fought to make it what it is, both in war and in peace." R.J. said. "From the World War II memorial to the visit to the House Floor, I was in awe at the sight of what makes America 'the land of the free and the home of the brave.'"

Southern Pine Electric congratulates these students on their accomplishments.