Rockingham Complex Is Now Open

The Rockingham Complex is now open, and Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) member-owners are invited to attend a ribbon cutting and open house planned for Saturday, Sept. 8, at 180 Oakwood Drive in Rockingham, Virginia.

The ribbon cutting will begin at 2 p.m., and the open house is set to run from 3-5 p.m. SVEC employees will lead group tours of the Rockingham Complex during the open house. Visitors will be directed where to park and then visit a registration table before being escorted around the building. It is the Cooperative’s goal to move tours along as quickly as possible so nobody is kept waiting too long.

If you plan on touring the facility, please be prepared for a considerable amount of walking. A limited number of wheelchairs will be available.

The Rockingham Complex is a state-of-the-art facility that meets the needs of member-owners and SVEC both today and well into the future. It combines the former headquarters in Mount Crawford and Rockingham District office in Dayton, plus has a warehouse and garage on the property.

At the conclusion of the open house tours, hot dogs, chips, water, and ice cream will be provided. There is no cost for the food, but meal tickets must be presented for ice cream. The tickets will be handed out to visitors at the registration table before tours begin.

Please consider joining us in celebrating the opening of the Rockingham Complex! If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact SVEC in person, by phone at 1-800-234-7832 or by email at svecpr@svec.coop.

SVEC offices will be closed on Monday, Sept. 3, in observance of Labor Day. Please have a great holiday and stay safe as you celebrate the unofficial end to summer!
Operation Round Up Concludes Successful Year

In late July, Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative’s Operation Round Up Committee awarded its final set of grants for 2018, concluding a year in which $24,000 was contributed to community projects in the Co-op’s service territory.

Operation Round Up (ORU) is a program where SVEC member-owners voluntarily “round up” their bills to the nearest dollar, and the cents flow into the charitable fund.

The program launched in the fall of 2017 and began offering grants in January. A committee of nine member-owners and one Cooperative employee review applications from area nonprofit organizations, civic clubs and others.

On average, a member-owner will contribute only $6 per year toward the program. Larger, one-time contributions are also accepted and greatly appreciated so an even greater impact can be made on the communities served by the Cooperative.

For 2018, the committee reviewed 50 applications and awarded 23 grants, spreading the $24,000 in grants throughout SVEC’s service territory.

“It is through this type of program that SVEC is able to carry out one of its core principles of ‘Concern for Community.’ It truly encompasses what it means to be a part of a cooperative,” ORU Committee Chairman Chris Runion says. “To help all of these great organizations accomplish their goals, the Operation Round Up Committee needs the help of SVEC member-owners. If you have not yet signed up for Operation Round Up, I strongly encourage you to consider it.

“It is a painless way to give, and it magnifies and multiplies. It’s pennies a month that add up to invaluable impact.”

As the contributions of rounded-up funds continue to grow, SVEC is hopeful that a combination of member-owner participation and corporate allocations will lead to a major opportunity to address crucial needs in the communities it serves.

For the latest round of grants, the ORU Committee selected the following recipients:

- **Lord Fairfax Community College (Page County)** to support the needs of the Luray-Page County Center through its “Evening with the Stars” program for scholarships and other projects.

- **Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging** toward the purchase of a new replacement van for its senior center and Meals on Wheels program. The new van will fill a void and help the organization avoid shutting down its services in case of an issue with its primary van.

- **Faith in Action (Winchester/Frederick County)** to provide free, door-to-door transportation to non-emergency, life-sustaining medical appointments and treatments for those in the area without other means of transportation.

- **Honor Flight – Top of Virginia (Winchester/Frederick)** to help cover costs related to no-expense missions for veterans to Washington, D.C., where they visit memorials dedicated to honor the service and sacrifices of themselves and their friends.

- **Glossbrenner United Methodist Church (Augusta County)** to enhance HELP (Health Equipment Loan Program), which is run by a collective of churches and civic organizations to loan out equipment for free to people who need it.

- **Valley Program for Aging Services (Augusta County)** to help cover the cost of food for the Meals on Wheels Program. The contribution amount should cover more than 100 meals.

- **Elegius Mini Equine Sanctuary (Highland County)** for an expanded youth-employment opportunity — particularly for those who might have a disability and/or are unable to find employment in Highland County — at the sanctuary, which provides permanent housing and care for injured/ailing miniature horses, donkeys, mules and ponies.

- **Arc of Augusta** for the non-waiver scholarship program, which provides funding to enable people with intellectual and development disabilities who lack sufficient funds to attend day-support programs.

“On a rainy Monday, finding the grant-approval letter on my chair when I came back in my office was definitely a mood brightener,” says Roberta Lauder, director of resource development for Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging, which is based in Front Royal. “I want SVEC and the committee members to know your support and this award mean a lot to us. Your gift is very important to us. With the Operation Round Up support, we are getting close to reaching our first $20,000, one-third of the way to a new van.”

Please sign up today for Operation Round Up by visiting any SVEC office, calling SVEC at 1-800-234-7832, or clicking on the Operation Round Up page under “Account” through the e-Business portal at svec-online.coop.

For more information on the program, please visit svec.coop/ORU. Grant distribution will begin again in January 2019. An application for funding will be made available later this year online and in SVEC offices.

Full list of 2018 Operation Round Up grant recipients:

- AbbaCare Inc.
- Arc of Augusta
- Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northwest Virginia
- Blue Ridge Area Food Bank
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County
- Crossroads to Brain Injury Recovery
- Elegius Mini Equine Sanctuary
- Elkton Area United Services
- Faith in Action
- Family Promise
- Glossbrenner United Methodist Church
- Honor Flight – Top of Virginia
- Laurel Center
- Lord Fairfax Community College
- Page One
- Rotary Club of Harrisonburg Foundation
- Shenandoah Area Agency on Aging
- Shenandoah Area Council – Boy Scouts of America
- Shenandoah County 4-H
- United Way of Greater Augusta County
- United Way of Northern Shenandoah Valley
- Warren Coalition
- Valley Program for Aging Services
Sixth District Rep. Bob Goodlatte, R-Roanoke, has been named a Distinguished Friend of Electric Cooperatives by the Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC).

The award honors legislators and others in public service who have strongly supported the best interests of electric cooperative member-owners. Goodlatte, who announced plans to retire at the end of his current term at the end of this year, accepted his award on July 23 during the Association’s annual meeting in Hot Springs, Virginia.

In his remarks, VMDAEC Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Larry Howdyshell, a Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) board member, noted Goodlatte’s steadfast support of Virginia’s electric cooperatives throughout his time in Congress. Goodlatte was first elected in 1992.

“While maintaining a hectic schedule of legislative duties, Congressman Goodlatte always made himself available to discuss issues of importance with electric cooperatives and their member-owners, who are also his constituents,” Howdyshell said.

Goodlatte was nominated by leaders from BARC, Central Virginia, Craig-Botetourt, Rappahannock and Shenandoah Valley electric cooperatives, whose service territories are part of his district.

The 2018 Distinguished Friend of Electric Cooperatives Award nomination cites Goodlatte’s record of public service. He currently serves as chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and is co-chairman of the bipartisan Congressional Internet Caucus, chairman of the House Republican High-Technology Working Group, and co-chairman of the Congressional International Anti-Piracy Caucus. He and his wife, Maryellen, have two children and several grandchildren.

Goodlatte is the second lawmaker in SVEC’s territory to earn the Distinguished Friend honor in the last three years. In 2016, Del. Tony Wilt, R-Broadway, received the award.

### Turn to SVEC About Renewable Needs

SVEC seeks to be the trusted energy resource for member-owners. With that in mind, at your earliest convenience, please contact the Cooperative if you’re considering renewable installation and/or distributed generation. By talking with our staff in advance of making any decisions or investment, we can ensure you have a smooth process toward interconnection.

Learn how to get started by visiting svec.coop/netmetering, and please follow these steps as they are listed on the website:

1. Call SVEC at 1-800-234-7832 or visit your local office to provide preliminary information for net metering at your property.
2. When you’re ready, submit the Net Metering Interconnection Notification (NMIN) Form to SVEC. This represents a member-owner’s official request to the Cooperative.
3. Once an NMIN Form is received, an SVEC engineer will (within 30 days) review your:
   - Equipment, to ensure that it is appropriately certified by Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).
   - Location, to ensure there are no changes necessary with the Cooperative’s distribution system.
   - System’s size, to ensure that the generating facility will not produce more energy than what was used in the previous year (detailed regulatory information is available from the State Corporation Commission).
4. SVEC will let you know if your design is approved for interconnection and you’re approved to build your system.
5. An appointment is set for on-site inspection and testing of interconnection by SVEC.
6. Meter swap occurs, and new net meter is set and activated by SVEC.
7. You’re finished!
Take It **Eazy** with Auto Payments

Everyone needs a break once in a while. Enrolling in the Eazy Pay program at Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) guarantees that you will have that opportunity at least once every month.

Eazy Pay is a free, safe and secure way to make sure that your monthly electric bill is paid on time by having the amount automatically withdrawn from your financial institution account. Member-owners enrolled in the program are thankful to have a worry-free payment option.

“Signed up for auto pay the day I signed up for service. It’s a lot quicker and easier. It just makes my life a lot more convenient. With two young kids, it’s one less thing for me to have to worry about,” said Jim Nebgen, a member-owner in Rockingham County.

Signing up is simple. Here’s how you can participate:

• **Log-in to or sign up for** e-Business at svec-online.coop. Once logged in, click on “Eazy Pay” under the “Account” section.

• **Fill out** the authorization form on this page — or print one off from svec.coop — along with a voided check for your checking account or deposit slip for your savings account, and return the documents to SVEC in person at any office or by mail to SVEC, Attn. Eazy Pay, PO. Box 236, Mount Crawford, VA, 22841. **Please do not return the form with your regular payment**.

Please note that your account must reflect a zero balance before enrolling in Eazy Pay, modifying your Eazy Pay information or discontinuing your participation in the program. The name of the SVEC member-owner must match the name on the financial institution account. Upon receipt of the required information, SVEC will set up the direct debit of your financial institution account.

You will continue to receive a monthly bill from SVEC as usual. On this statement, you will see a new line to the effect that, “Your bank account will be debited for $ (total amount due) on (date).”

You will be charged ABSOLUTELY NOTHING for this service, and you may cancel at any time. Please remember to allow at least five (5) business days before the debit date to cancel the payment deduction or make changes to your financial institution information. Also, please remember that the payment will have to be made by another payment method.

Give yourself a break and consider signing up for Eazy Pay today.

“You do not have to use a stamp or write a check, and with everyone’s busy schedules, Eazy Pay is a real time saver,” SVEC Manager of Member Services Barbara Frye said.

![SVEC Eazy Pay Authorization Form](image-url)
Labels can be misleading. If her 18 years on Earth have taught Aubree Morris anything, it’s just that. The first lesson came at 9 years old when her father, Jerry, received a canister of kerosene from a friend who was remodeling a home. At least, kerosene is how the jug was labeled and what both the friend and Aubree’s father were led to believe comprised its contents.

One spring day, Jerry Morris asked his youngest daughter if she wanted to help burn brush at their home on Mountain Valley Road in Rockingham County. Her job was to light the pile that was soaked in kerosene. However, it turned out the liquid was gasoline, which brought a painful way to learn that labels cannot always be trusted. “The flame knocked me back and burned the top and front half of my body,” Aubree said. “I had first-, second- and third-degree burns.”

For the next two months, her chest and arms had to be wrapped, and plenty of ointment applied to her face. Aubree couldn’t bend her arms and struggled to write. “I hated taking baths,” she said. “That was the worst.”

But being viewed as a “burn victim” brings scars deeper than the surface of the skin. A fourth-grade student at the time, Aubree faced a lot of teasing at the hands of her elementary peers. “It was hard,” she said, “but I never missed a day.”

From there, the second lesson about misleading labels is derived: It’s not how people tag you — “burn victim,” or anything else — but how you portray yourself in your own skin that matters most.

In the aftermath of her burn incident, Aubree found a way to be herself, label free, thanks to a local program called the Mid-Atlantic Burn Camp.

“Being burned isn’t a curse. It’s kind of a blessing in disguise,” she said. “[At camp], you can find such a beautiful community of people who have had just the same experiences as you. The people are so loving and kind. You can be yourself. They still love you no matter what.”

Milestone Year

Celebrating its 30th year, the burn camp hosts survivors ages 7 through 17 from Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey and Washington, D.C., for a week of activities at Brethren Woods Camp and Retreat Center in Rockingham County. There’s no expense to campers.

The camp’s directors, Linda French and Tonas Kalil of Clarksville, Maryland, were physical therapists at the Baltimore Regional Burn Center when, in 1988, they began planning a burn camp fashioned after a similar one in Denver, according to the camp’s website. The location of the camp varied until a permanent move to Rockingham County in 1992, when French and Kalil also established Mid-Atlantic Burn Camp Inc., a nonprofit that supports outreach to burn units, young survivors and their families throughout the region.

Campers enjoy various activities during the 30th annual Mid-Atlantic Burn Camp at Brethren Woods Camp and Retreat Center in Rockingham County. This year’s camp had 54 attendees and ran from July 29 through Aug. 4.
The 30th camp was recently held July 29 through Aug. 4. It had 54 campers with 45 counselors.

“Burn camp is a great support group,” Kalil said during a break on the second day of camp. “It allows the kids a chance to get together with other people who share their experiences, the same scars, in a safe, informal environment.”

Lt. Erin Stehle, public education officer for the Harrisonburg Fire Department, is one of the camp counselors and considers the event “by far” the best activity associated with her job.

“Being in prevention is so important and being surrounded by burn survivors all week re-energizes me so that I can come back to work and hopefully continue to prevent burn injuries,” she said. “Being a counselor is so fulfilling and the burn survivors teach me so much about life and remind me how to appreciate the small things.”

Burn camp is more than its name suggests. Kalil said among the counselors this year were a social worker and psychologist because, for many kids, their burn injuries are not necessarily the biggest issue.

Aubree Morris was among the campers this year, and one of only a handful from the Shenandoah Valley. She actually lives within about 3 miles of Brethren Woods, but Aubree’s mother, Sandy, learned of the camp from a friend.

At 10 years old — the summer after her brush fire incident — Aubree enrolled.

“When I first went, I said that I’d go for the day and come home. I ended up staying the whole week,” she said. “I’ve made some of the best friends there. It’s a different experience for all of us. We bond and see how we’ve all persevered, showing that we can get through it to become successful.”

SVEC Scholarship Winner

Sandy Morris said her daughter’s burn injuries could have been much worse, but fortunately, when the incident occurred, Aubree was wet from playing in a sprinkler. While her scars have mostly healed in the nine years since, she admits she’s still not comfortable around fires or ovens.

This year was the last year Aubree was eligible to attend the camp since she turned 18 at the end of August. She is now a student at Frostburg State University in Maryland, pursuing a career in nursing while also participating on the swim team.

Aubree is also one of 10 graduating high school seniors in 2018 who earned a $1,000 college scholarship from Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative. In her essay to the scholarship committee, she said she hopes to one day work at Sentara RMH Medical Center.

“I want to work in a place that helped me through my burns and other injuries as a child, so I can make the same impact that my nurses made on me,” Aubree wrote. “If a child or adult comes in, I want to inspire them to become whatever they want and know that just because life has setbacks, it does not mean you can’t achieve and overcome anything in the world.”

It’s that type of attitude that makes her a prime candidate to return to burn camp as a counselor in the future. She’s more than ready to teach others the importance of living a label-free life.

“I love watching the younger kids. I’ve seen kids grow up and they come off the bus the next year and they’re taller than me,” Aubree said. “I know that I’ll end up back there some day.”

For more information about the camp, please visit midatlanticburncamp.org.
SVEC Offers LED Web Deal

When it comes to lighting, the best ways to save money are to turn off the lights when not in use and replace old bulbs with energy-efficient LEDs (light-emitting diodes). LEDs last longer and use less energy than the spiral-shaped compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) or traditional incandescent bulbs.

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) has partnered with Cree Inc., a leading LED manufacturer, and online retailer 1000Bulbs.com to offer member-owners exclusive deals on energy-efficient bulbs. Cree LEDs have 25,000 hours (22 years) of lifetime. They are “instant on,” dimmable and environmentally friendly.

To take advantage of the special LED pricing offer, and to complete the online ordering process, you must be an SVEC member-owner and use SVEC’s e-Business page. It’s free and easy to sign up!

To sign up, or log in if you’ve already registered, please visit svec-online.coop. The link to the online offer is on the left side of the e-Business home page, under “Account.”

Please take advantage quickly to enjoy savings today.

SVEC Warns Against Scam Calls

Shenandoah Valley Electric Cooperative (SVEC) has received several reports of scammers operating in our service territory recently.

The callers are threatening to disconnect service to member-owners unless a payment is made.

Please note that SVEC will NEVER call member-owners to ask them to make a payment by phone.

Our employees will only communicate about potential termination of electric service through a mailed notification, not through a phone call asking the member-owner to pay for his or her service by credit card.

If you have any questions about your account, you can call the Cooperative for more information at 1-800-234-7832.

Additionally, if you have received one of these scam calls, SVEC suggests that you please contact our office to verify your account status, and contact law enforcement immediately if you have sent money to the caller.

Here are a few common signs of a potential scam activity, from the Utilities United Against Scams:

- **Threat to disconnect.** The impostor utility representative aggressively tells the Cooperative member-owner that his or her account is past due and service will be disconnected if a large payment is not made.

- **Request for immediate payment.** The caller instructs the member-owner to quickly purchase a prepaid debit card that is widely available at retail stores.

- **Request for prepaid debit card information.** The caller asks the member-owner for the prepaid debit card’s number, which grants the caller instant access to the card’s funds.

Visit utilitiesunited.org for more information and tips about how you can protect yourself from scams.
DISTRIBUTING HOPE, One Meal at a Time

by Preston Knight, SVEC Writer

A round the shelves of Hope Distributed, the buzzwords are dignity and respect.

Founder Sam Montanez said people who visit the nonprofit organization deserve to be treated with both of those, or else the mission of the organization falls short.

“Just because somebody is down and out and life’s been really hard for them doesn’t mean we cannot have a place where they feel like they matter, and to show we really care,” he said during a recent tour of Hope Distributed’s expanded food pantry.

The facility, at 1869 Boyers Road east of Harrisonburg, serves more than 2,000 people in need each month. Hope Distributed also provides household items through its Homes to Homes furniture store and warehouse and free clothing store — it gave away more than 47,000 outfits in 2017 — out of its former location on the same property, alongside Harrisonburg First Church of the Nazarene. Montanez is one of the church’s pastors and leads its missional and Hispanic ministries.

The new 6,000-square-foot food pantry, which opened in February, is three times larger than the previous one and designed to accommodate future growth. This is tied to Hope Distributed’s five-year goal of serving 8,000 people a month, equal to 30 percent of those in the poverty level in Rockingham County and surrounding areas.

While Harrisonburg and Rockingham County residents are the primary beneficiaries of the organization’s generosity, the facility is open to anyone who meets a certain income threshold. A photo ID is required.

People are allowed to visit the food pantry once a month and shop for themselves, with a few limitations on some items. Before the new facility opened, volunteers and the three part-time staffers at Hope Distributed would box groceries in advance. Too often, there were unwanted foods included.

While a monthly shopping spree will likely not provide enough food for a family until they visit again, it at least offers some savings for people living on low incomes, Administrator Jenny Meadows said. In other words, it distributes hope to them.

“When we opened in October 2004, we served 12 people that day. We’ve come a long way since then,” Director Vickie Waldrop said. “It’s just amazing to me to see the number of people we get.”

Hope Distributed is the largest food pantry in Rockingham County and the Verona-based Blue Ridge Area Food Bank system. The food bank is one of Hope Distributed’s funding sources, along with Feeding America, the Houff Family Foundation, Hartman Foundation, Steiner Foundation and multiple local individual donors.

Through partnerships with the food bank, Walmart, Food Lion and Costco, among others, Hope Distributed maintains fully stocked shelves and packed refrigerator and freezer space. More than 500,000 pounds of food are distributed a year.

To fulfill its mission, Hope Distributed relies on a network of more than 150 volunteers, plus college groups, companies and others that periodically dedicate time to serve. This includes not only the regular food pantry, but also Hope on Wheels — its mobile food pantry that makes a monthly distribution of food to individuals who can’t get to the physical food pantry — and Hope for Kids, a school pantry program that provides boxes of food for children and their families during the winter holiday.

Waldrop said there is a seasonal uptick in people who visit Hope Distributed over the summer because school is not in session. But, she adds, every month brings different people whose circumstances may lead to temporary financial hardships that affect their access to food.

The visitors are a cross-section of society, Waldrop said, and it’s important to remember that it does not take much for a series of events to occur that could lead a person to the food pantry’s doorstep.

Anyone who can donate time or money to help Hope Distributed fulfill its goals is welcome, said Anne-Marie Wenger, a member of its board of directors and lead volunteer.

“The need is real,” she said. “Hunger is not just a Hope Distributed issue. Hunger is an issue for all of us.”

The Hope Distributed food pantry is open to the public the first Thursday of the month from 9:30-11:30 a.m., every Thursday from 4-6 p.m. and the first, second and third Saturday of each month from 9-11 a.m. For more information, visit hopedistributed.org or call (540) 578-3510.