Major League Dreams

Pirates center fielder Andrew McCutchen watches the ball fly out of McKechnie Field in Bradenton during a 2013 spring training game. McCutchen’s smooth, lightning-quick swing led to another All-Star season and honors as the National League’s MVP. He was the first Pirate to win the award since Barry Bonds in 1992. Read about baseball’s spring training on page 12.

PHOTO BY DAVID LABELLE
Prepare for Summer Heat Now

By B. Denise Hawkins

Adding a few items to your list of spring chores can help make your home more energy efficient and deliver electric bills that won’t make you sweat when temperatures soar.

Start with your air conditioner. Spring and early summer are good times to make sure your air conditioning unit is ready to work when you flip the switch.

Get help from a professional who can inspect and service your unit.

Give your air conditioner a do-it-yourself cleaning. Shut the unit off, and clear away leaves and yard debris outside. Inside the unit, clean or replace filters that can restrict air flow and reduce overall efficiency by making the air conditioner work harder on hot summer days. Dust the fan blades if you can do so safely. Make sure air can flow freely over the inside and outside coils. Vacuum registers to remove any dust buildup.

Check weather stripping. When using window units, ensure that weather stripping is in place. Placement should be between the middle of the top window pane and the bottom pane.

Check out your roof. See how well your roof has weathered the winter. Few things can shorten the life of your home faster than a roof leak. Even a minor one can damage your attic insulation before you know it. A roofing professional can assess loose or missing shingles, repair leaks and clear gutters.

Make your electric cooperative a resource. Member service representatives at Glades Electric Cooperative can give you more energy-saving tips and suggestions to help you determine the right steps for your home. You can also visit www.togetherwesave.com to find out how little measures around the house can add up to big energy savings as temperatures outside climb.

Top your household spring to-do list with a call to your co-op. Help from an energy-efficiency expert now can pay off later with lower utility bills during the summer.

Photo courtesy of Greg Brooks, Walton EMC
2014 Sample Ballot

Candidates for Trustee & Proposed By-Law Amendments

District 5
- Ladd Bass (incumbent)
- Nominated by Committee

District 7
- Jim Aul (incumbent)
- Nominated by Committee

District 9
- Irene Lofton (incumbent)
- Nominated by Committee

Proposed Amendment to Article III, Meeting of Members, Section 3: Notice of Members’ Meetings
RESOLVED, that the By-Laws of the Cooperative be, and they are hereby amended by the following change to the first sentence of Article III, Meeting of Members, Section 3: Notice of Members’ Meetings: Written or printed notice stating the place, day and hour of the meeting and, in case of a special meeting or an annual meeting at which business requiring special notice is to be transacted, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be delivered not less than ten days nor more than thirty (30) days before the date of the meeting by, or at the direction of the Secretary, or by the person calling the meeting, to each member.

YES ☐ NO ☐

Proposed Amendment to Article IV, Trustees, Section 2: Election and Tenure of Office
RESOLVED, that the By-Laws of the Cooperative be, and they are hereby amended by adding after the last sentence of the first paragraph of Article IV, Trustees, Section 2: Election and Tenure of Office a sentence stating: In the event of a tie vote between an incumbent Trustee and any opposition candidate, the incumbent shall retain the position.

YES ☐ NO ☐

Proposed Amendment to Article IV, Trustees, Section 3: Qualifications
RESOLVED, that the By-Laws of the Cooperative be, and they are hereby amended by inserting at the beginning of the sentence in Item A. and by inserting within the sentence of Item D. and by adding after the existing Item E. of Article IV, Trustees, Section 3: Qualifications:

A. Be a natural person or individual and be a member of the Cooperative for at least 12 months, maintain their primary residence in the district which the Trustee represents and purchase electric energy from the Cooperative at that residence;

D. Not be employed by the Cooperative or any entity controlled by the Cooperative or an entity in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest and must not have been employed by the Cooperative for a period of five years before becoming a Trustee, and no Trustee may become an employee of the Cooperative or any entity controlled by the Cooperative or an entity in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest for a minimum of five years after leaving the Board of Trustees;

F. Not been convicted of a felony or any misdemeanors involving dishonesty;

G. Subjected to a criminal background check administered by the Cooperative;

H. Subjected to and passed the initial drug screenings administered by the Cooperative for its employees;

I. Subjected to a credit check performed by the Cooperative without evidence of a history of financial irresponsibility; and

J. Is a member in good standing of the Cooperative without any disconnections for non-payment of utility services within the last five years.

All persons desiring eligibility to become or remain a Trustee shall be required to (1) execute a document that attests to compliance with the qualifications as stated in this Article IV, Section 3 of these By-Laws, and (2) provide a release for the Cooperative to investigate and acquire reports necessary to affirm such compliance in order to be deemed qualified.

YES ☐ NO ☐

Proposed Amendment to Article III, Meeting of Members, Section 3: Notice of Members’ Meetings
RESOLVED, that the By-Laws of the Cooperative be, and they are hereby amended by inserting at the beginning of the sentence in Item A. and by inserting within the sentence of Item D. and by adding after the existing Item E. of Article IV, Trustees, Section 3: Qualifications:

A. Be a natural person or individual and be a member of the Cooperative for at least 12 months, maintain their primary residence in the district which the Trustee represents and purchase electric energy from the Cooperative at that residence;

D. Not be employed by the Cooperative or any entity controlled by the Cooperative or an entity in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest and must not have been employed by the Cooperative for a period of five years before becoming a Trustee, and no Trustee may become an employee of the Cooperative or any entity controlled by the Cooperative or an entity in which the Cooperative owns a majority interest for a minimum of five years after leaving the Board of Trustees;

F. Not been convicted of a felony or any misdemeanors involving dishonesty;

G. Subjected to a criminal background check administered by the Cooperative;

H. Subjected to and passed the initial drug screenings administered by the Cooperative for its employees;

I. Subjected to a credit check performed by the Cooperative without evidence of a history of financial irresponsibility; and

J. Is a member in good standing of the Cooperative without any disconnections for non-payment of utility services within the last five years.

All persons desiring eligibility to become or remain a Trustee shall be required to (1) execute a document that attests to compliance with the qualifications as stated in this Article IV, Section 3 of these By-Laws, and (2) provide a release for the Cooperative to investigate and acquire reports necessary to affirm such compliance in order to be deemed qualified.

YES ☐ NO ☐

Glades Electric Cooperative’s mission is to provide exceptional service.

Jack Coxe
President
District 8

Jim Aul
Vice President
District 7

Russell Henderson
Secretary/Treasurer
District 3

Donnie Lundy
District 1
Please Join Us!

Glades Electric Cooperative Inc.
Annual Meeting

March 15, 2014

Glades Electric Cooperative Inc.’s 2014 Annual Meeting will be Saturday, March 15, 2014, at Clewiston Middle School, 601 W. Pasadena Ave., in Clewiston, Florida.

The purpose of the meeting is to elect Trustees, vote on proposed By-Law changes and hear officers’ annual reports. Registration, entertainment and voting will begin at 8 a.m. The business meeting will begin at 10 a.m.

Join us for great entertainment, fun and prizes, including a 2003 Ford Expedition for one lucky member. Plan to attend!
Meet Your Board Candidates

The Nominating Committee proposed these candidates for re-election.

**District 5, Venus and Hicora**

**Ladd Bass, Incumbent**

A sixth-generation Floridian, Bass spent most of his childhood in Glades County, graduating from Moore Haven High School. He earned a bachelor’s degree in food and resource economics from the University of Florida and has been actively involved in some aspect of the commercial cattle business his entire adult life.

Bass works for Great Plains Feed Yard based in Hereford, Texas; co-owns B&S Cattle Co.; and is an independent contractor with Cargill Cattle Feeders.

He has first-hand experience in, and a complete understanding of, the economic challenges facing the agriculture industry in South Florida. He has 20-plus years in marketing, management and sales.

Bass has lived in Highlands County since 1998. He and his wife, Renee, have been married 19 years. They have two children: Mattie, 17, and Amery, 14.

They are members of Venus United Methodist Church.

**District 7, Lorida**

**Jim Aul, Incumbent**

A resident of Lorida, Aul has been a member of the cooperative since 1986. He is an office manager for a general construction firm in Lake Placid, which gives him the opportunity to work with people to design and build new homes and businesses.

Aul was elected to the Board of Trustees in March of 1996 and is completing his sixth term as a Trustee. He is a member of the Seminole Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees, serving on the administrative committee and various subcommittees.

He has completed numerous training sessions as a Trustee and has earned the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association’s Credentialed Cooperative Director’s Certificate and Board Leadership Certificate.

Aul has two sons: Corey, 22, and Garrett, 20.

He and his family are members of First Presbyterian Church of Lake Placid.

**District 9, Okeechobee**

**Irene Lofton, Incumbent**

A lifelong resident of Okeechobee County, Lofton graduated from Okeechobee High School. She owns and operates a cattle ranch, which keeps her extremely busy.

“Being a Trustee takes a lot of time and commitment,” she says. “We cannot afford to miss meetings because the business of the cooperative must be handled. Keeping up with the changing utility environment in order to make sound business decisions is an ongoing challenge. I am particularly proud of our Operation Round Up program and system restoration.”

Elected to the board in March 1996, Lofton is completing her sixth term as a Trustee and also serves on the Glades Electric Educational Foundation. She has completed all certification classes through NRECA and earned a Credentialed Cooperative Director’s Certificate.

Lofton is a member of the Okeechobee Cattleman’s Association and the National Cattleman’s Association.

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**Directions to Clewiston Middle School, site of the 69th Annual Meeting**

![Directions to Clewiston Middle School](image-url)
Proposed By-Law Amendments

Glades Electric constantly seeks ways to more effectively and efficiently manage your cooperative. Changes to procedures and policies have led to cost savings and improved service to our members. Periodically, we ask members to consider amending the By-Laws of the cooperative to help us better manage their investment. With this in mind, we ask you to consider the following amendments (changes are underlined).

First Proposed Amendment
**Explanation:** This remedies a lack of a solution in the event an election for trustee should result in a tie vote. We are suggesting the trustee retain their seat, the rationale being an incumbent has not been defeated if their opponent did not receive more votes.

**RESOLVED,** that the By-Laws of the cooperative be, and they are hereby amended, by adding after the last sentence of the first paragraph of Article IV, Trustees, Section 2: Election and Tenure of Office a sentence stating: “In the event of a tie vote between an incumbent trustee and any opposition candidate, the incumbent shall retain the position.”

Second Proposed Amendment
**Explanation:** This helps ensure trustees have suitable credentials and exhibit the qualities required of this demanding position. Also, this helps eliminate the possibility of any conflicts of interest by restricting a trustee from being (or becoming) an employee of any entity owned, or controlled, by the cooperative for a period of 5 years.

**RESOLVED,** that the By-Laws of the cooperative be, and they are hereby amended, by inserting at the beginning of the sentence in item a and by inserting within the sentence of item D and by adding after the existing item E of Article IV, Trustees, Section 3: Qualifications:

A. Be a natural person or individual and be a member of the cooperative for at least 12 months, maintain their primary residence in the district which the trustee represents and purchase electric energy from the cooperative at that residence;

D. Not be employed by the cooperative or any entity controlled by the cooperative or an entity in which the cooperative owns a majority interest and must not have been employed by the cooperative for a period of two five years before becoming a trustee, and no trustee may become an employee of the cooperative or any entity controlled by the cooperative or any entity in which the cooperative owns a majority interest for a minimum of two five years after leaving the board of trustees;

F. Not been convicted of a felony or any misdemeanors involving dishonesty;

G. Subjected to a criminal background check administered by the cooperative;

H. Subjected to and passed the initial drug screenings administered by the cooperative for its employees;

I. Subjected to a credit check performed by the cooperative without evidence of a history of financial irresponsibility; and

J. Is a member in good standing of the cooperative without any disconnections for nonpayment of utility services within the last five (5) years.

All persons desiring eligibility to become or remain a trustee shall be required to (1) execute a document that affirms compliance with the qualifications as stated in this Article IV, Section 3 of these by-laws, and (2) provide a release for the cooperative to investigate and acquire reports necessary to affirm such compliance in order to be deemed qualified.

Third Proposed Amendment
**Explanation:** This aligns the annual meeting notification parameters with the production and mailing schedule of Florida Currents magazine, the cooperative’s newsletter. This alleviates the need to delay, or otherwise alter, the normal mailing date of Florida Currents and provides GEC members with additional notification of the annual meeting.

**RESOLVED,** that the By-Laws of the cooperative be, and they are hereby amended, by the following change to the first sentence of Article III, Meeting of Members, Section 3: Notice of Members’ Meetings: Written or printed notice stating the place, day and hour of the meeting and, in case of a special meeting or an annual meeting at which business requiring special notice is to be transacted, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called shall be delivered not less than 10 days nor more than forty-five (45) days before the date of the meeting, by or at the direction of the secretary, or by the person calling the meeting, to each member.
Operation Round Up Monthly Report

More than 70 percent of Glades Electric Cooperative members participate in Operation Round Up. This program helps people in GEC’s service area who have exhausted normal avenues of financial assistance. Sign up today, and your electric bill will be rounded up to the nearest dollar. The extra is placed in the fund for deserving individuals and organizations.

As of February 5, your Charitable Trust Board of Directors has approved $813,929.25 in disbursements. These funds have provided assistance with food, emergency lodging, disaster relief and specific emergency needs for 538 individuals and/or families and 112 community organizations.

The trust does not fund utility bills (electric, phone, water and gas) or budgets of organizations. Organizations in our service counties may apply for funding for a specific need or project. The Charitable Trust Board of Directors meets monthly to review applications for funding.

If you know of people who need and deserve assistance and live within our service area, encourage or help them to complete an application. Applications can be picked up at each of our three offices: Moore Haven, Lake Placid and Okeechobee.

Charitable Trust Board of Directors
Barbara Hughes
District 1
Moore Haven

Beverly Eaves
District 2
Hendry County

Kelly Brantley
District 3
Ortona/Palmdale

Dori Evans
District 4
Lakeport

Lori Thompson
District 5
Venus/Hicora

Lee Andrus
District 6
Highlands Park

Jerry Chasteen
District 7
Lorida

David McCadam
District 8
Lake Josephine

Angela Hodges
District 9
Okeechobee

The next meeting of the Charitable Trust Board of Directors is March 27 at 1 p.m. in Lake Placid.

High-Quality Surge Protection Offered by GEC

Glades Electric Cooperative is proud to offer members a new choice in home surge protection with Meter Treater, manufactured by M-Ti. This Florida-based company’s meter-base protection devices have been protecting Florida homes since 1986. M-Ti also manufactures superior surge protection devices for commercial and industrial applications. The company has earned a reputation for innovative design, high-quality workmanship, and friendly, responsive customer service. Our members deserve nothing less! Contact a GEC office for more information.

$25 Credit Winners

William and Lisa Lucas
No. 104014-001

Robert and Donna Miles
No. 13985-001

Winners should call (800) 226-4024 or sign their name on this page and mail it to:

Florida Currents $25 Credit
Glades Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 519
Moore Haven, FL 33471

Church of the Month

First Baptist Church of Lake Josephine
111 Lake Josephine Drive
Sebring, FL 33875

The next meeting of the Charitable Trust Board of Directors is March 27 at 1 p.m. in Lake Placid.
Powering Your Home With Renewables

When you think about renewable energy, what comes to mind? Wind turbines? Sunshine and solar panels?

Chances are, when you picture renewable resources, you probably do not consider the contents of your garbage bag as a renewable energy option.

But for Seminole Electric Cooperative, the wholesale power provider for Glades Electric Cooperative, the renewable energy used is generated from materials you might not expect.

Seminole’s renewable energy portfolio includes 113 megawatts of electricity from waste-to-energy facilities, 17 MW from landfill gas-to-energy facilities and 13 MW from a biomass facility.

Municipal solid waste refers to residential and commercial waste that is collected and burned to produce electricity—also called waste-to-energy.

So, the next time you roll your garbage can to the curb or take your trash to the dumpster, keep in mind it may be used to generate electricity.

For waste or garbage that does not go directly to waste-to-energy facilities, it is likely stored in closed municipal landfills. As the waste breaks down in landfills, methane gas is emitted naturally. It is captured and burned to generate electricity, making landfill gas another viable renewable resource.

While municipal waste and landfill gas use recycled trash and waste to generate electricity, biomass is known for using more organic resources such as crop residues: straw, husks or grass clippings you may bag after trimming the lawn.

Biomass also is generated from farm animal waste or citrus pulp from a nearby citrus processor.

Why invest in renewable energy?

Seminole’s first source of renewable energy was established in 1999 with a waste-to-energy facility in southern Florida. The decision to buy renewable energy was not only an economical decision to meet member energy needs at that time, but presented the opportunity to diversify Seminole’s energy portfolio, while upholding Seminole’s value of being a steward of the environment.

In 2008, the Florida Legislature passed a bill requiring the Florida Public Service Commission to adopt rules for a renewable energy portfolio standard.

This proposed legislation prompted Seminole’s Board of Trustees, made up of 27 member trustees—including three GEC board members—to obtain additional renewable energy sources.

Although the legislation did not pass, 7 percent of Seminole’s energy now comes from renewable sources. That percentage gives Seminole honors among all Florida’s electric utilities with the largest renewable portfolio in the state.

Seminole also owns and operates two power plants that generate the electricity you use on a daily basis. Seminole’s coal-fired power plant, the Seminole Generating Station, is in Putnam County. The Midulla Generating Station, Seminole’s natural gas-fired power plant, is on the Hardee/Polk county line.

Seminole’s diverse energy portfolio—consisting of coal, natural gas and renewables—helps keep member electricity rates competitive.

In partnership, Seminole and GEC continue to keep your electricity affordable, safe and reliable.
Florida Rural Electric Credit Union

Is It Time For A New Boat?

Don’t get stuck in dry dock all season. Let us help you purchase that sea worthy vessel you desire.

New, Used, Refinanced Boats: **4.89%*  

*Annual Percentage Rate. Offer subject to being removed without prior notice. Subject to credit approval. Refinance applied to boats financed at other institutions. Current FRECU loans do not apply.
Organ Donation Helps Save Lives

As National Donate Life Month nears, learn the facts about organ donation

By B. Denise Hawkins

April is National Donate Life Month, and those responsible for increasing the level of organ and tissue donation in the U.S. are renewing the call for donors who can help save lives of those in need of transplants.

The most pressing need in organ donation remains the shortage of donors. The Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network, which maintains the nation’s transplant waiting list, reported that in the first nine months of 2013, there were 121,076 candidates waiting to receive new organs. New names are added every 10 minutes, and about 18 people a day die while waiting.

Most organ and tissue donations come from deceased donors. One person can save up to eight lives. But as the need for organs grows, more people are becoming living donors.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports that about 6,000 living donations are made annually; the most frequent procedure is a single kidney transplant. Other common living donations include a lung, or a part of the lung, pancreas and intestines.

Of those on the nation’s waiting list for kidneys, more than one-third are African American, according to the National Kidney Foundation. African Americans suffer disproportionately from high blood pressure, diabetes and certain genetic diseases, which puts them at high risk for kidney disease.

To become a donor, place your name in the Florida organ donor registry at www.donatelifeflorida.org. Designate your decision to donate on your driver’s license, and share your decision to be a donor with your family, physician, religious leader and friends. When you die, a family member must indicate that it was your desire to donate your organs. Include organ donation in your advance directives, will and living will.

Preparations Continue for New Metering System

Glades Electric Cooperative will begin installing new advanced metering infrastructure and powerline carrier automated meters in April.

This will be a significant technological advance from the mechanical dial and digital automatic meters now used by the cooperative.

Powerline carrier automated meters transfer information through the same lines that carry electricity to your home. This technology will improve the reliability and efficiency of the existing electric distribution system.

Installation of the new meters is expected to take about 24 months.

Members can expect to lose power for a few minutes on the day of installation.
A Day in the Life of a Lineworker

They wake before the sun, pour steaming cups of coffee and kiss their family goodbye. After swinging by the office to get the day’s orders, they climb into their trucks and head out.

Our lineworkers form a solid team with one job: to deliver safe, reliable electricity. But that job can change in a million ways when rough weather steps in.

We often take power—and the men and women who provide it—for granted. Let’s take a moment and stand in the boots of Glades Electric Cooperative’s linemen.

Linemen have to work safely, smartly and efficiently—all while 40 feet in the air wearing sturdy, thick rubber gloves.

On a typical day, lineworkers maintain electrical distribution lines or build service to new homes and businesses. They have a lot on their plates. But when our dispatch center calls crews with a problem, everything else takes a backseat.

Power restoration takes precedence on a lineworker’s to-do list. These brave men are always on call, standing by to serve you 24 hours a day, in the middle of the night, wee hours of the morning, weekends and holidays.

Can you imagine getting a call at 3 a.m. telling you to work outside during bad weather? Not many people are willing to face storms. Our lineworkers face harsh elements daily, all to serve you.

Lineworkers also focus on safety. Job safety is important, no matter the occupation. But for linemen, there can be no slip ups or careless actions. The lives of co-workers are on the line. Mistakes can cost a limb or life. That’s one of the reasons linemen form a brotherhood.

When you put your life in the hands of co-workers every day, they become more than colleagues. They’re family.

That sense of family extends to electric co-ops across the nation. One of our principles is cooperation among cooperatives. We help other co-ops in their time of need, and they extend that service to us, too. It is reassuring to know if a severe storm strikes, a national team of linemen stand ready to answer the call.

Linemen are highly trained to be ready to respond no matter the situation or weather conditions. At Glades Electric Cooperative, linemen go through regular training to ensure they can work safely with various kinds of equipment. The equipment gets tested regularly, too.

These highly skilled men and women light our homes and businesses every day. They endure harsh weather and long hours, all to make our lives better.

Today—and every day—please take a moment to thank them. GEC’s linemen are the heart of the co-op nation, proud and strong.
CEO’s Message

It’s March … Time for Our Annual Meeting

Oh so quickly another year has passed and our Annual Meeting is upon us. We’ll gather in Clewiston this year at the middle school. You’ll find all of the directions and instructions within this edition of Florida Currents. As was the case last year, we will not send separate registration cards. All you’ll have to do to register is submit a picture ID that matches the name on your cooperative account.

This year we have several By-Law amendments up for your approval. Passage of these amendments will ensure cost-effective communication of the Annual Meeting, continue to provide strong and effective Board leadership and offer a solution for the highly unlikely outcome of a tied Trustee election. Please be sure to come and cast your vote, not only for these By-Law amendments, but in support of each of the candidates seeking election.

We also have a great prize lineup for you, including the grand prize: a 2003 Ford Expedition! As always, we will bring you up to date in more detail during the business session of the Annual Meeting. For now, I will let you know we finished 2013 in good standing. All debt covenants were met or exceeded and, as a result, your equity level continued to climb. In the not-so-distant future, with this continued success we will be in position to meet one of my personal goals: refunding capital credits to you, our loyal members.

My hat is off to all our employees who made this year the success it was. Across every department, operating expenses were held under budget. We've already come up with new ideas to further improve in 2014.

I look forward to seeing you in Clewiston.