


Member News

For Members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Did You Know...

that Operation RoundUp® works in a community near you?



Carteret-Craven Electric Foundation and members of Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative, working together have made strides in making our communities a better place to live. In 2002, the Foundation approved \$185,560.42 in funding to individuals and local organizations in Carteret, Craven, Onslow, and Jones counties. Since 1999, the Foundation has administered more than \$500,000 to individuals and organizations. Funding may be provided for individuals finding themselves in unexpected crisis situations. Nonprofit organizations may apply for funding through the Foundation and will be evaluated based on their need and the services they provide to our communities.

Last year, the Foundation administered funding to local communities in the following manner: provided funding to individuals who needed medical assistance and emergency funding after a personal tragedy; The American Cancer Society's Relay for Life; Social Services of Carteret County and Havelock-Cherry Point Ministerial Association, both provide heating funds to families in need; Arts Council of Carteret County for the Art Start program that provides arts programming for low-income areas; Broad Street Clinic which provides medical assistance and prescription drugs; March of Dimes for birth defect research; Children's Miracle Network, a pediatric unit at Pitt Memorial Hospital in Greenville, NC; Morehead City Parks & Recreation for "English as a Second Language" education program; Harlowe Community Center to help upgrade their kitchen facilities; Literacy Council of Carteret County for teaching and training materials; Scholarships to local kids so they can participate in recreational sports leagues; Habitat for Humanity; Friends of

Hospice Festival of Trees; Carteret County Domestic Violence program for materials and repair to fenced area for children's playground; UNC Burn Center Outreach which provides educational efforts to teach children "Learn not to Burn"; and local Dental Mobile Unit "Miles of Smiles" that aids at-risk children in the Carteret County school system.

The Foundation also provides funding to three programs administered by the Cooperative. They are Bright Ideas, Scholarships, and Project Christmas Cheer. The Bright Ideas Grant program provides funding to local educators in Carteret and Craven counties who submit applications for unique and creative classroom projects, not funded by traditional means. Scholarships provide funding to high school students for continuing education at a four-year college or community college. Winning students have the opportunity to receive a thousand dollars per year for four years as long as they maintain a 2.5 or higher grade point average. Project Christmas Cheer, supplemented by the Foundation and Carteret-Craven employees who donated money and time, helped needy families by purchasing clothes, food, and toys before Christmas.

Carteret-Craven members have a choice in "rounding up" their electric bill each month to the next whole dollar. For example, if your electric bill is \$52.71, you will be billed \$53.00. The 29 cents difference will go into the Foundation trust fund. The average annual contribution per account is \$6.00 and the maximum amount that can be donated annually is \$11.88. Operation RoundUp® contributions are tax deductible. Operation RoundUp® is working in a community near you — small change does change lives. Together, we're making a difference!

MARCH 2003

CARTERET-CRAVEN ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

How soon will the North Carolina oyster disappear?

Guest Editorial by Michael Gery
Editor, Carolina Country Magazine

They say that months containing the letter "r" are the months to eat oysters. The truth is, oysters may taste better to some people from September through April, because colder water gives oysters a distinctive taste. However, you can eat oysters harvested in any month of the year, as long as there are oysters to harvest.

Here is some sobering information about North Carolina oysters compiled and published recently by the N.C. Coastal Federation (NCCF).

- In 1902, North Carolina harvested 1.8 million bushels of oysters. In 1998, the yield was 138,000 bushels. In 2001, it was 48,707 bushels.
- About 1.43 million acres are open to shellfishing in North Carolina. Another 364,132 acres are closed permanently. In addition, another 50,000 acres are "conditionally open," meaning that they are shut down when heavy rainfall pollutes them. Stormwater accounts for more than 90 percent of shellfish closings.
- Oysters contributed an average of \$932,086 to the state's fishing industry in the past 10 years. If you add the annual catch of finfish and crabs (all of which rely on the oysters' habitat for survival), the value of healthy oyster beds is more than \$62 million per year.
- A single market-size oyster can filter about 50 gallons of water per day. In the late 1800s, oysters in the Chesapeake Bay filtered out and cleaned the entire



bay in three to six days. Today it takes them an entire year, because there are far fewer healthy oysters.

- More than 75 percent of all fish and shellfish depend on wetlands for growth and survival. North Carolina has lost 49 percent of its wetlands since they have been identified.
- Runoff from pavement accounted for 39 percent of North Carolina's polluted waters in 2000. Agricultural runoff (nutrients and pesticides) accounted for 58 percent of the state's polluted waters from 1995-1999.

George Gilbert, who worked 30 years with the N.C. Shellfish Sanitation Section in the state government until retiring last summer, told the N.C. Coastal Federation, "If we keep going the way we're going and don't do anything different and don't make improvement, within five to ten years, the oyster industry in North Carolina will be gone." Sen. Marc Basnight, who grew up gathering and shucking oysters in Dare County, told the NCCF, "I blame all of us. People used to say, 'It's the hogs, the hogs, the hogs.' I used to say, 'Look into the mirror. We are the hogs.'" The NCCF's longtime executive director Todd Miller said in his introduction to the organization's "2002 State of the Coast Report:"

"Oysters are dying because our coastal ecosystem is grossly out of balance. We've altered salinity patterns with ditching and paving. Stormwater runoff is polluting

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Safety Corner

In our daily lives we are constantly guided and protected by standards and procedures. Most common examples of safety guidelines are the traffic laws we observe while driving or OSHA standards in the workplace. We tend to be mindful of these regulations because of the penalties imposed for violations. But in reality these regulations exist to prevent injuries.

On a routine basis we let our guard down as we work around the home and most often we do not feel bound by regulations and procedures. Choosing not to observe safe work practices at home creates an environment for potential accidents. For this reason, we should remember to use safety sense at home in our daily activities.

Outdoor Safety

- Use hearing and eye protection when using power tools.
- Clear rocks and debris prior to mowing.
- Use a wheelbarrow to move heavy objects.
- Keep steps and sidewalks clear of clutter.
- Store flammable liquids and chemicals properly.
- When using ladders outside, always be aware of nearby power lines.

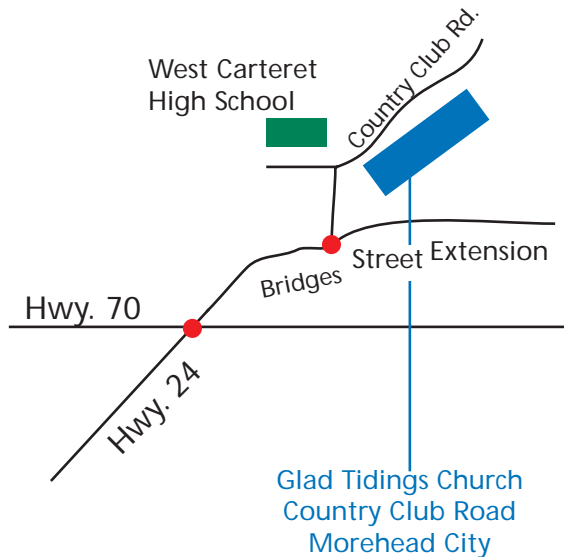
Fire Safety

- Install smoke detectors on all

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Carteret-Craven Annual Meeting Set For May 1st

The 2003 Annual Membership Meeting will be held at the Glad Tidings Church in Morehead City. Look for important Annual Meeting information on the cover of next month's issue of the Carolina Country magazine. Below is directions to this new location.



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North Carolina's oysters...

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our waters with nutrients, bacteria, and heavy metals. Hundreds of miles of shoreline are now bulkheaded with walls of poisoned wood. The oxygen in coastal creeks, rivers, and sounds is all too frequently depleted, creating dead water that is inhospitable to oysters and other sea life that can't move out of the way..." The damaged ecosystem must be made whole again. This can only be accomplished by working watershed by watershed, creek by creek, sound by sound."

While reviewing the rich history of oystering in North Carolina and detailing its contemporary problems, the NCCF also reports on projects that are helping to restore the fishery.

Volumes of studies and shellfish habitat improvement plans exist in Raleigh and elsewhere, but few have been taken seriously until recently. The NCCF says there is some hope now that the specter has appeared of a vanishing shellfish and the destruction of its habitat that allows other fish to thrive. The state's Clean Water Management Fund of 1996 has been of major help, even though every year the fund is subjected to budgetary wrangling and has survived largely through the efforts of Sen. Basnight. Some coastal communities are limiting installation of central sewer systems as a way to control development and water pollution. Some developers are working on ways to build less intrusive breakwaters and housing projects. University, government, and private organizations are establishing shellfish restoration projects on the sounds and bays along the coast.

"We're optimists around here," says the NCCF report. "We think we have it in us to keep our native oysters from becoming one of those relics."

For a free copy of the "2002 State of the Coast Report," contact the N.C. Coastal Federation at 3609 Hwy 24 (Ocean), Newport, NC 28570. Phone: (252) 393-8185. E-mail: nccf@nccoast.org.

Safety Corner

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occupied levels of the home and in the kitchen.

- Have a fire extinguisher in the kitchen area and the garage.
- Have an escape plan and practice fire drills with family members.

By using these safety checklist items as a guide, you can help make your home a safer place.

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**For more information:
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