

Georgia Cooperative Council Newsletter 2013

Special Interest Articles:

- Youth Leadership Conference
- Couples Conference BACK IN GA.!
- New Members

Cindy Greene Executive Director

NOTES FROM CINDY GREENE

2013 wow what a year! Every summer I have been amazed at the incredible students that co-ops send to the Ga. Youth Cooperative Leadership Camp. They arrive full of potential, curiosity and energy! All have goals and dreams and come from different backgrounds. The beauty of it all is that they spend a week supporting and accepting each other and when the week ends, they

sadly leave their new friends in hopes to see each other again.

I am proud to be part of such a special program that invests in these young people's lives by preparing them for the future, educating them about co-ops and impacting their lives.

Does the Cooperative receive return on the investment of sponsorship of these students?

Absolutely! Since working with these youth I receive messages from them of their success in all types of activities. Even parents have thanked us for the positive impact the camp has made on their children.

It gives me great hope for the future of co-ops that youth like this will one day be our managers, directors, members and employees.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

As 2014 begins, every cooperative has the opportunity to participate in the Georgia Cooperative Council events.

This is an exciting time for Georgia with many opportunities and growth potentials emerging. This is the time to support Georgia's future through the Georgia Cooperative Council's Scholarships and Awards, Cooperative Youth Conference and Couples' Conference. The scholarships and awards of course enable higher learning. We need an

educated future! The Georgia FFA Agricultural Proficiency Award, the 4-H Environmental Science Project and the newly developed Scholarship Award with ABAC for 2014 do just that.

The Youth Conference is a tremendous opportunity for approximately 50 Georgia students to learn about what a cooperative is and how they are affected daily by them for a full week at the Georgia FFA Center in Covington. Most of our member cooperatives send

representatives to work with students one on one.

The Couples' Conference is a tri-state effort to work with couples nominated by their cooperatives to learn more and become member advocates. To learn more about these and the other awards available, please contact me directly at agdawg@msn.com.

Executive Director Cindy Greene.

To make these scholarships and awards possible, we need your support!

“Co-ops are a powerful force, distinctive because they are owned and controlled by the people who use their products or services.”



2013 YOUTH CONFERENCE – A LEADERSHIP WEEK

For more than two decades, the Georgia Cooperative Council has sponsored the Youth Conference as part of its ongoing mission to educate students about cooperatives and the vital role they play in growing and supporting the nation's economy.

The conference is also designed to build the student's leadership skills and promote teamwork through a series of exercises, training and presentations.

According to Frances Edmunds, chairman of the Georgia Co-op Council board and Marketing Specialist with Southwest Georgia Farm Credit, attendees gained first-hand experience of cooperatives and their common goal: Maximize service, rather than profits for their member-owners

and contribute to the economic health of their communities.

“Co-ops are a powerful force, distinctive because they are owned and controlled by the people who use their products or services,” says Camp. These students will grow into tomorrow's leaders, and it's important for them to understand co-ops and the role they play in local communities and across the country.”

38 students participated in the conference conducted at the Georgia FFA/FCCLA Center located near Covington on beautiful Lake Jackson.

During the five day conference students engaged in activities such as the Congressional Insight Workshop in which they participated by making staff, media and legislative decisions to gain deeper understanding as to why

their involvement in the political process is vital. Student teams made decisions regarding a number of political challenges over a simulated two-year period, keeping the ultimate goal of re-election and public approval in mind.

Other highlights included personality assessments to teach students how to efficiently work with a range of personalities and “Co-ops 101”, where speakers discussed the cooperative business model, including history, organization, member benefits and current issues.

Outdoor team building activities included high and low ropes courses. The week would not be complete without the slip 'n slide! Fun was had by all!

Students also engaged in other activities such as

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LEADERSHIP WEEK *cont.*

mixers that are designed to help develop social and networking skills. Students also enjoyed a visit to Snapping Shoals EMC and the Godfrey Dairy in Madison. Students enjoyed a solar demonstration at Snapping Shoals and a hands-on experience with dairy cows at Godfrey's.

The students really enjoyed the opportunity to visit these cooperatives. This year's presenters included Frances Edmunds, Southwest Georgia Farm Credit, Jack McMullan AgGeorgia Farm Credit; Craig Scroggs, USDA; Steve Uram, NRECA; Mark Camp, Southern States; Mark Nofi, GEMC Credit Union; Mark Coiner, Dairy Farmers of America; Jennifer Broun, Walton EMC and Gale Cutler, Georgia EMC.



2013 COUPLES CONFERENCE

The annual multi-state Couples Conference moved to Georgia in 2013 and was held Aug. 2-4 at The Ridges Resort and Marina on Lake Chatuge in Hiawassee. Participants included couples from Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Sixteen Georgia couples sponsored by AgGeorgia Farm Credit, AgSouth Farm Credit, Canoochee EMC, Dairy Farmers of America, Diverse Power, Flint Energies, Irwin EMC, Jackson EMC, Middle Georgia EMC, Ocmulgee EMC, Planters EMC, Rayle EMC, Southern Rivers Energy, Tri County EMC and Walton EMC attended the event.

The multi-state conference is an opportunity to meet new people and create new friendships while learning of the various cooperatives that operate in their everyday lives.

Brad and Kellie Dowdy, sponsored by Ocmulgee EMC, returned as this year's host couple. Matt and Brittany Comerford, sponsored by Diverse Power, were elected to serve as the host couple for 2014.



MORE ON YOUTH CONFERENCE

Our youth leadership conference was held at the Georgia FFA/FCCLA Center in Covington. The five-day conference was attended by 38 outstanding young students representing all regions of Georgia.

Sponsors were: AgGeorgia Farm Credit, Altamaha EMC, Canoochee EMC, GreyStone Power, Irwin EMC, Middle Georgia EMC, Ocmulgee EMC, Planters EMC, Rayle EMC, Snapping Shoals EMC, Tri-County EMC, Upson EMC and Walton EMC.

In addition, seven FFA students and six 4-H student were sponsored by the Georgia Co-op Council.

Each year conference participants elect two of their group to be advisors to the following conference. The Youth Advisors for this year's conference were M'Kade Woods and Kelly Sweeney. A huge thank you goes out to them for their participation and outstanding leadership.

The Youth Advisors elected for the 2014 Leadership Conference are Sam Nelson and Lana Goitia.



MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Georgia Cooperative Council is proud to announce two new members in 2013 – the Georgia EMC Federal Credit Union and the Georgia Transmission Corporation.

The 2013 Council was comprised of 50 Cooperatives in Georgia. Membership includes Dairy Farmers of America, Eatonton Cooperative Feed Company, Edison Gin, Maryland and Virginia Milk Producers, Southern States, Staplcoth Cooperative, AgSouth Farm Credit, AgGeorgia Farm Credit, SW Georgia Farm Credit, AgFirst Farm Credit Bank in Columbia, S.C., and Georgia's 40 Electric Membership Corporations.

Welcome Georgia Transmission and GEMC Federal Credit Union!

ANNUAL MEETING 2013

The 2013 Annual meeting was held Monday, March 4 at the Georgia Farm Bureau Federation Headquarters in Macon.

Co-op Council members from across the state represented their local Cooperatives. Under the direction of President Frances Edmunds, the meeting was recognition of the individuals that have been presented with Co-op Council Awards for the past year.

Youth Leadership Conference:
M'Kade Woods and Kelly Sweeney.

Couples Conference:
Brad and Kellie Dowdy, Ocmulgee EMC.

Pictures from the two conferences were shown and were very entertaining and informative about the activities at each conference.

Mrs. Katrina Jones, Georgia FFA Foundation Director, expressed appreciation from the Georgia FFA for the sponsorship of the Agricultural Communications Proficiency Award and the Marketing CDE team.

Andrew Day, winner of the 4-H Environmental Science Project, addressed the group about his project and expressed his appreciation of the recognition.

Kayla Mercer, an Animal Science major at Abraham Baldwin Agriculture College (ABAC), was awarded the Georgia Cooperative Council Scholarship.

Mr. Kenneth Cook, the recently retired President and CEO of Jefferson Energy was announced as the Council's 2013 Distinguished Cooperator Award winner and presented a Jefferson Cup by Mr. Gary Drake, Council board member and General Manager of Excelsior EMC.

Mrs. Susan Driscoll, Dean of the Stafford Business College at ABAC, was the featured speaker.

A native of Irwin County, Driscoll gave an informative talk on her life and history before returning to Georgia and accepting the position at ABAC.

Thank you to all that brought the many door prizes. Many guests and members gladly accepted the great gifts. After adjournment the group enjoyed a catered lunch.

The next Annual Meeting will be held on Monday, March 10, 2014 at the Georgia Farm Bureau Headquarters in Macon. Hope to see each of you there!

OTHER COUNCIL AWARDS IN 2013

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College was presented a check for \$700 for the Student Enrichment Program. Mr. Paul Willis, Vice President, External Affairs & Advancement, accepted the donation on behalf of ABAC.

The Cooperative Council Board approved a donation to the Georgia Junior Livestock Foundation. \$1000 was presented to the group to support the state-wide effort to recognize the efforts of this outstanding group.

The Georgia Junior Livestock Foundation (GJLF) is a newly formed statewide organization that recognizes the 4-H and FFA youth of Georgia for their hard work and dedication. The Georgia State 4-H and FFA Livestock Shows were chosen as a forum to aid these young people. Through public support and fundraising projects, the Foundation will be able to provide financial assistance to Georgia's youth actively involved in the livestock industry through premiums, scholarships and other industry initiatives. The long range goal of the GJLF is to create a scholarship component that may reward youth livestock participants regardless of their success in the show ring. Go to <http://www.gajrlivestockfoundation.org/> for more information about the program.

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Mark Camp (far left) past president of the Ga. Cooperative Council, presents the Reserve Champion Market Lamb Award at the 2013 Georgia State Fair to Ty McDermitt of Carrollton.

Georgia Cooperative Council Annual Meeting

March 10, 2014

Georgia Farm Bureau Headquarters, Macon, Ga.

The meeting will begin at 10:00 AM and conclude after lunch.

Cooperative Youth Conference

July 14-18, 2014

State FFA/FCCLA Center, Covington, Ga.

Further information and nomination forms will be available Spring 2014.

2014 Couples Conference

August 1-3, 2014

The Ridges Resort and Marina, Hiawassee, Ga.

Further information and nomination forms will be available Spring 2014.