

## TIDELAND EMC SPECIAL REPORT: THE AFTERMATH OF HURRICANE IRENE



### FINDING LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Therefore we do not lose heart.  
Though outwardly we are wasting  
away, yet inwardly we are being  
renewed day by day.

So we fix our eyes not on what is  
seen, but on what is unseen. For  
what is seen is temporary, but what  
is unseen is eternal.

2 Corinthians 4: 16 & 18



# Real People. Real Pain.



heartache  
& healing



"I am preparing the Print Order for the November magazine and notice that every single eastern North Carolina co-op sent mailing lists with fewer numbers. For example, Tideland will mail the magazine to 340 fewer members than the month before. So sad."

Email from the editor of  
Carolina Country  
magazine

Photographs in this publica-  
tion were provided by:

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# Behind the numbers are real people.

**THIS WAS IRENE'S GROUND ZERO** If you don't realize that, drive to places like Pamlico Beach, Lowland, Stumpy Point and Sladesville.

## RECOVERY IS FAR FROM OVER

Everyday another member calls to say "We're ready now to restore electric service." The process will continue for months. Maybe even years.

## SOME WILL NEVER RECOVER

There are those who don't have the resources to rebuild. Others are simply worn out and don't have it in them to try again.



Note the high water mark along the foundation of these Fairfield Harbour townhouses. These were among the more than 700 meters destroyed systemwide.

**BE A FORCE OF NATURE** When the disaster relief agencies pull up stakes and leave there will still be work to be done. When the news headlines move on to the next big tragedy there will still be individual, quiet tragedies unfolding all around us. You can be a force of nature. You can help roll back the tide of despair that has dampened the outlook for the hardest hit communities.

## TAKE TIME TO MAKE A HUMAN CONNECTION.



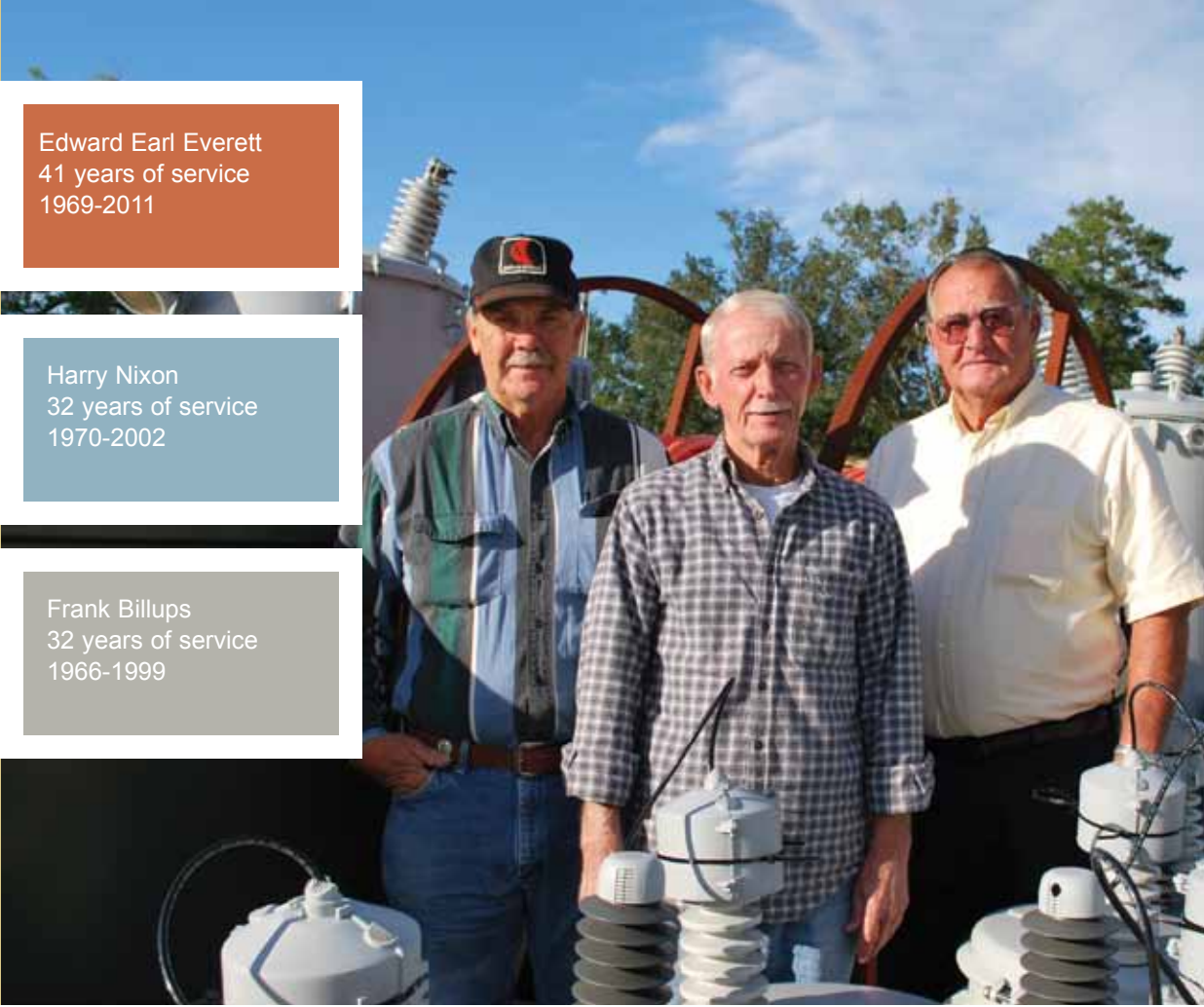
Edward Earl Everett  
41 years of service  
1969-2011



Harry Nixon  
32 years of service  
1970-2002



Frank Billups  
32 years of service  
1966-1999



# in the LINE of duty

## Tideland retirees return to battle outages

**FRANK BILLUPS WAS 17 AND WORKING FOR CAROLINA TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH WHEN HURRICANE HAZEL, A CATEGORY 4 STORM, RAVAGED THE NORTH CAROLINA COAST. ALMOST 57 YEARS LATER HE MET HAZEL'S MATCH WHEN IRENE STALLED IN THE PAMLICO SOUND.**

So Billups wasn't entirely surprised when there was a knock on his door in the pre-dawn hours of Sunday, August 28. It was Tideland's Steven Barber asking the 32-year veteran if he would be willing to return to work for the co-op long enough to

get power restoration well underway. With utility crews from as far away as Louisiana and Florida assisting with repairs, it was imperative to have experienced crew leaders. Billups and fellow retirees Edward Earl Everett and Harry Nixon, know the Tideland electric system inside and out and for days each man led crews to help overcome the worst storm in the co-op's history,

When Billups answered the call he left behind \$9,500 worth of roof damage sustained to his own home from a tornado that passed overhead 36 hours earlier. It was the same twister that brought down a

Tideland transmission pole in Hyde County. He worked for four days to restore power to homes in Washington in the River Road, Pamlico Plantation and Forest Hills areas. The crews assigned to Billups hailed from Louisiana and were eager to get the job done so they could return home as Tropical Storm Lee made landfall just west of Baton Rouge.

Edward Earl Everett's last day of work at the co-op was to have included an employee luncheon to recognize his 41 years of service. Instead a freak wind storm

*continued on next page*



# Storm Stats...

## THE COSTS\*

FUEL, TRAVEL, TRANSPORTATION	\$47,984
MEALS & PROVISIONS	\$48,571
ACCOMODATIONS (MOTELS, COTS, LINENS & LAUNDRY)	\$61,252
GENERATOR SERVICES	\$65,000
MATERIALS & SUPPLIES	\$265,207
LABOR	\$2,100,643
<b>HURRICANE EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$2,588,657</b>

## THE MATERIALS\*

- BROKEN POLES REPLACED: 135**
- BROKEN CROSSARMS REPLACED: 75**
- TRANSFORMERS REPLACED (OVERHEAD & UNDERGROUND): 139**
- ELECTRIC METERS DESTROYED: 772**

## THE WEB (8/26/11 TO 9/5/11)

- INDIVIDUAL VISITORS TO TIDELANEMC.COM: 3,924**
- TOTAL VISITS TO CO-OP WEBSITE: 8,332**
- TOTAL PAGEVIEWS: 15,668**

\*Figures are subject to increase as storm accounting continues



## THE CALLS

Our phone system logged 12,024 outage telephone calls. Of those, 7,223 were handled by a live operator. The other 4,801 were handled by our automated outage reporting system.

## Line of duty

continued from previous page

came along and the retirement cake was put on hold while he and his fellow linemen responded to outage calls. Within a month of retiring Everett required back surgery for sciatic nerve pain attributed to several blown discs. So it's particularly amazing that for six days following Hurricane Irene, Everett led repair crews from Florida while wearing a hard brace to protect his back. At Duck Creek Shores his crew encountered flood waters that were 7 feet deep. Everett's own home remained without power and he lost both fencing and roofing from his horse barn. Just to reach Tideland, Everett had to chainsaw his way down his own driveway.

While Harry Nixon is officially retired from Tideland he's managed to keep hanging around the place and Hurricane Irene was no exception. Since exiting in 2002, Nixon has returned several times to help with various Tideland projects including our meter conversion program. Post-Irene, he spent two days conducting damage assessments in Beaufort and Washington counties. He then led repair crews through Hyde, Beaufort and Washington counties for another eight days. More than a month later, he continues to deal with storm damage, retrieving meters lost to flooding. Fourteen years old when Hurricane Hazel struck, Nixon said he considers Irene on par with that benchmark storm.

With over 100 years of Tideland EMC service between them, why did these retirees rejoin the ranks long enough to restore power? Why would they subject themselves to such difficult conditions, including 16-hour workdays, while their own repair needs were delayed? Because their electric co-op roots run strong and deep and not even a historic hurricane can topple that type of commitment.



Fun Fact:

## Linemen do the Dew

When it comes to quenching their thirst, linemen appear to prefer Mountain Dew to Pepsi. During Hurricane Irene, 2,268 cans of Mountain Dew were consumed versus 720 cans of Pepsi. And to keep drinks and water cold, the co-op used 6,720 pounds of ice.

## FEMA'S ROLE IN OUR DISASTER RECOVERY

Tideland EMC is fortunate to qualify for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Public Assistance Program. We anticipate reimbursement for storm-related expenses, with FEMA providing 75% of the funding. North Carolina Emergency Management will likely provide the remaining 25%. Officials from both agencies were at our office on September 19 to begin the paperwork. It may take 6 to 8 months before we receive the first reimbursement.