

- **COMMUNITY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT** - We support economic and community development associations, are chamber of commerce members, and are involved in meetings with prospective business and industry. MLEC works with TVA and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Loan Program. We have acquired loans to help businesses expand and start-up. Some examples include child care, health care, and job career centers. We've also helped with local airports, school facilities, and county buildings.
- **MLEC CARES** - Designed by our employees, they donate a dollar or more each pay period to an MLEC Cares account for their county. Each December the money is used to buy Christmas gifts for needy children, help families who have lost their home because of fire, etc. The MLEC Cares program also holds food drives and other programs to support local neighbors in need. Local United Way organizations also receive support from MLEC employees.
- **THE TENNESSEE MAGAZINE** - By being an MLEC residential member you receive this magazine each month. It contains articles on everything from recipes to travel. The seven-page MLEC section is written for our members to keep you informed about programs, services, area events, etc.
- **CO-OP CONNECTIONS** - As an MLEC member, you receive this FREE card that provides discounts at participating local and national businesses. Look for participation stickers in local businesses. MLEC members have saved over \$1 million since we started the program! You can save on everything from the foods you eat to event tickets!
- **FREE Wi-Fi** - As a community support project, MLEC offers MyMLECNow, a free wi-fi hot spot service in most of the counties we serve.

- Member-owned; not-for-profit
- Committed to improving the quality of life in our communities
- Safe, affordable, reliable electricity
- Pairing innovation and technology to meet the evolving needs of our members.

"MLEC is your source for power and information and striving to providing more than energy to the members we serve."



MERIWETHER LEWIS ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE 2016 - 2017 WASHINGTON YOUTH TOUR & SCHOLARSHIP CONTEST

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU

1

REMEMBER

Ask your teacher about formatting your story, and their deadline date. (All stories must be submitted to MLEC by March 2, 2017.) Remember, do not use your name in the story; use fictional characters. Make it informative and be creative!

THE TRIP

The top winner at each high school from Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Lewis and Perry Counties* will receive an expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., June 9-15, 2017. (Trip winner does not have to reside within the MLEC service area.)

THE SCHOLARSHIPS

The girl and boy at each high school receiving the highest score, who receives power from MLEC, will be awarded a \$1000 scholarship. MLEC's overall winner from within the service area will win a \$2000 scholarship and compete for up to \$3000 in additional scholarships. (One lucky Tennessee student going on the 2017 WYT might win a \$10,000 scholarship!)

**Home- and private-schooled students will be grouped and judged with the school they would attend if enrolled in public school.*



IMPORTANT INFO ABOUT MLEC 1A

- MLEC is a rural electric cooperative. This means we are not-for-profit and member-owned.
- MLEC is owned by those who use our electricity. Our member-owners live in Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Lewis and Perry Counties. We've been around since August 16, 1939.
- A person becomes a member by paying a \$5 membership fee, agreeing to buy electricity from MLEC, and agreeing to comply with its rules and regulations.
- Cooperatives were formed to distribute electricity in rural areas. No other company or organization would undertake the job because of the low population of the area. They didn't think they could make enough money.
- Democratic member control puts our member-owners in the driver's seat because they elect the MLEC Board of Directors. Those interested in serving on the MLEC Board must be a co-op member. Voting is conducted by written ballot at local member meetings each October. The Board of Directors is composed of 13 members –three from Hickman, four from Humphreys, and Houston, Lewis and Perry each have two. They serve four-year terms.
- The MLEC Board makes the policies and serves as our governing body. It sees that the cooperative is run to the best interest of ALL members and that the policies are followed. The board employs a CEO to oversee the cooperative's day-to-day operations.
- MLEC buys electricity from the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) at wholesale rates and distributes it to MLEC members. TVA has no control over the cooperative other than requiring that it meet certain regulations and obligations of its power contract.

- There are 22 rural electric cooperatives in Tennessee and almost one thousand in the United States. In Tennessee, electric cooperatives serve 2.5 million people and 1 in 3 Tennessee homes, farms, industries, and institutions.
- Open communication with our members is important. We use Twitter, Facebook, *The Tennessee Magazine*, newspapers, radio, and www.mlec.com to reach those we serve.
- MLEC provides electricity and a wide variety of services to our member-owners. Some are related to electricity, and others are part of our commitment to provide more than energy to the members we serve.

7 Cooperative Principles

Owned and operated by those they serve, cooperatives are organized under a set of guidelines called the Cooperative or Rochdale Principles. Although much has changed since rural Americans first pooled their resources to bring power to their homes, the Seven Cooperative Principles still serve as the basis on which Tennessee's electric cooperatives are governed, closely tying cooperatives to the communities they serve.

Voluntary and Open Membership

Cooperatives are voluntary organizations open to all people able to use their services and willing to accept the responsibilities of membership.

Democratic Member Control

Cooperatives are democratic organizations controlled by their members, who actively participate in setting policies and making decisions.

MLEC INVOLVEMENT & PROGRAMS 1B

- **eScore** - This program is developed through a partnership between TVA and MLEC. eScore provides homeowners with a simple way to make existing homes as energy-efficient as possible! Plus, rebates are available. You can get up to \$250 for a heat pump, \$50 for doors, and even \$25 - \$400 for water heaters. Visit the "Ways to Save" tab at www.mlec.com for details. (Heat Pump financing is also available.)
- **FREE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE** - Consultations with commercial and industrial accounts is available. Wiring designs, power factor recommendations, heating and air conditioning, lighting, energy audits and more are available.
- **HOME INSULATION PROGRAM (HIP)** - One of the biggest energy thieves in your home is inadequate insulation, and it affects the amount of your heating and cooling bills. MLEC helps make insulation more affordable with its "HIP" program and offers rebates up to \$750 for attic insulation.
- **FREE ENERGY AUDITS** - As a co-op we're here to save our members money, unlike investor owned utilities. Members can do FREE energy audits online to learn where their energy dollars are going and receive a free energy conservation kit. Our energy specialist can answer energy questions in extreme usage situations.
- **MY POWER MY WAY** - Pay what you want, when you want over the phone or at your MLEC office or kiosk. Purchasing electricity before you use it allows you to control your budget. When your account runs low you can get an alert by phone, text, or e-mail, letting you know it's time to renew your account. You watch what you use and purchase more before you run out. Track your daily energy use at MyUsage.com.
- **PROJECT HELP** - A program designed to help our members who need temporary help paying their energy bills. Many members contribute to this local fund by having a dollar or more added to their monthly bill.
- **SCHOOL PROGRAMS & INVOLVEMENT** - This is important to MLEC. We sponsor programs such as the Washington D.C. Youth Tour Short Story Contest, Louie the Lightning Bug, Adopt-A-School Grants, 4-H Camp, Youth Leadership Summit, student book program, school events, poster contest, Little League teams and high school sports on participating local radio stations. We also speak to students and civic organizations about electrical safety, and offer tours of MLEC buildings.

Members' Economic Participation

Members contribute equitably to, and democratically control, the capital of their cooperative.

Autonomy and Independence

Cooperatives are autonomous, self-help organizations controlled by their members.

Education, Training, and Information

Cooperatives provide education and training for their members, elected representatives, managers and employees so they can contribute effectively to the development of their cooperatives.

Cooperation Among Cooperatives

Cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together.

Concern for Community

While focusing on member needs, co-ops work for the sustainable development of their communities.