

# the Co-op Connection

JULY 2023

NEWS AND INFORMATION FROM YOUR POWER PARTNER





# Plug Into Your Communities Like CFEC!

**As we move into the summer season, we are ready for what happens nearly every single day – as the heat builds, so does the stormy weather.**

And, with this weather pattern, comes more power outages. It keeps our line-side resources busy, but it is part of what we do and who we are.

In good news as we move on into 2023, we are continuing to see the price of natural gas remain low, and this is going to allow CFEC to lower overall electric bills using the Wholesale Power Cost Adjustment. With the rise in natural gas prices at the end of 2021 and during 2022, our WPCA went from a credit to a charge. Since early this year, it has been steadily coming down. If this trend continues, we will be able to significantly reduce our overall power prices later this year – really good news for you, our members.

## Welcoming Our First Fiber Customers

By the time this publication makes its way to you, our first fiber customers will be connected and receiving giga-bit speed internet unlike anything we have ever seen in this area. It has been almost exactly one year since the CFEC Board of Directors made the decision to pursue a Fiber-To-The-Home network until now.

Given this enormous heavy lift we are undertaking, I would like to ask our members to consider one thing – when it comes to selecting an internet provider, remember that we are not an outside entity coming into this area. We have been here since 1939, we are not-for-profit, and YOU OWN US. When we do well, you will do well, and our community will benefit. And, we have made the commitment that even if it is just you on the end of the line, we will bring internet to you. So, please remember that as the coming months unfold.

## Beyond Phase 1

Also, by the time you get this, we will have a much better idea of our building plan beyond Phase 1 and the speeds at which we think we can move. We will communicate future phases and timing as soon as we have those. As well, you will likely have options to continue services from wireless providers, just as I do today at my home now. While this is better than not having service at all, I encourage you to sign no long-term contracts, and we'll look forward to serving you as soon as we can get fiber to you.



**Denny George**  
GENERAL MANAGER

## Look Forward To The Same Member Services

Remember, the member services that you experience every day with CFEC will also be available to you on the fiber side. The same men and women that have children who go to school with your children, where some of them coach local ball teams, that attend church with your families, and attend, Rotary, Kiwanis Clubs with – bottom line, they are really local.

As we continue to manage CFEC daily and undertake this fiber effort, I remain grateful for you and for the opportunity to serve you. I leave you with I Thessalonians 5:18 – “In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” Don't forget to plug into your communities wherever you are and serve.



~YOUR POWER PARTNER~

Our mission is to be the finest example of an electric cooperative where excellent service, competitive rates and concern for the consumer, community and environment guide our every action.

Cover photo: Fiber-to-the-Home internet being installed on a home in Levy County by Madison Redd, CFEC Communications Specialist

## New District 9 Trustee: Larry K. Thompson

**At the recent Annual Meeting of Members of Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Larry K. Thompson was elected to fill the open trustee position in District 9.**

Thompson brings a lot of area business experience as well as community involvement to the CFEC Board. He is president and principal owner in Straw America, LLC, a pine straw company, and he is also a principal in Nature's Source Products that provides premium firewood for indoor or outdoor fireplaces, wood fire grilling, smoking and gourmet cooking. Thompson also owns a tree farm.

In the area of community service, Thompson is on the governing board of the Suwannee River Water Management District, a board member of Career Source Florida Crown, and he is also on the community

board of Capital City Bank.

"I look forward to continuing the great service the Cooperative provides for its Members as far as electricity and the new fiber-optics," Thompson says. He also looks forward to engaging with the Board of Trustees and lending his business and community experiences to better serve the co-op.



**Larry K. Thompson**  
TRUSTEE, DISTRICT 9

## CFEC Scholarships for Graduating Seniors

**Central Florida Electric Cooperative is proud to award these outstanding students one of the CFEC Educational Charity Scholarships to help further their educational goals!**

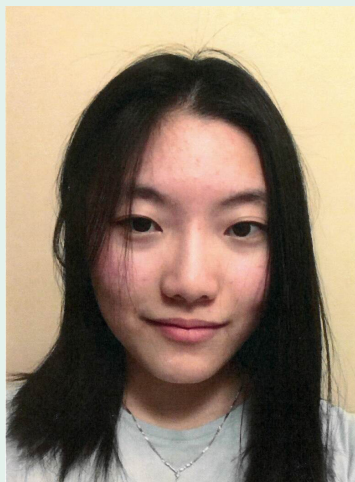
Each recipient will receive \$2,000 at \$1,000 per semester to be used within one year. To be eligible, an applicant's parent or legal guardian must be an active member of CFEC.

The CFEC Educational Charity, Inc. scholarships are funded through unclaimed capital credits and the CFEC Educational Round-Up Program.

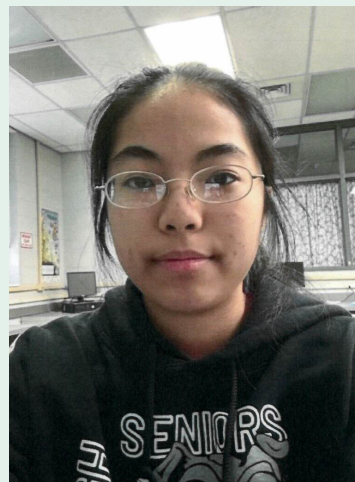
***Congratulations to the 2023 CFEC Educational Charity Scholarship winners!***



**Alaina Blair**  
Bell High School



**Sandra Lin**  
Bell High School



**Vicki Lin**  
Bell High School

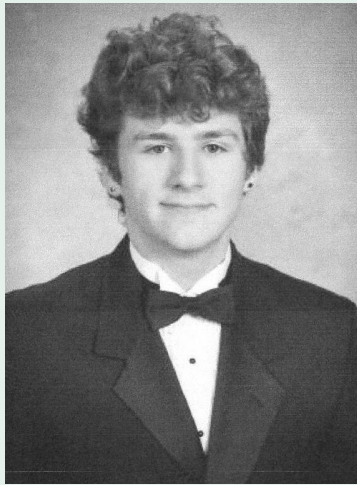


**Riley Bray**  
Bronson High School





**Cathleen Strickland**  
*Bronson High School*



**Kasey Weeks**  
*Bronson High School*



**Kendall Bailey**  
*Cedar Key High School*



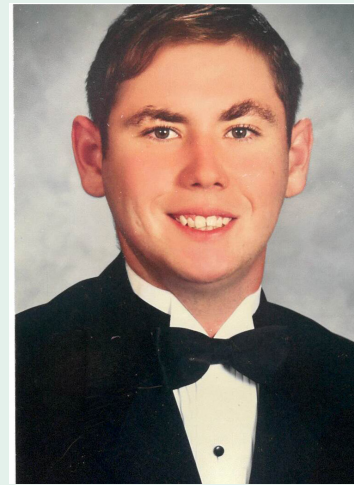
**Audrey Collins**  
*Cedar Key High School*



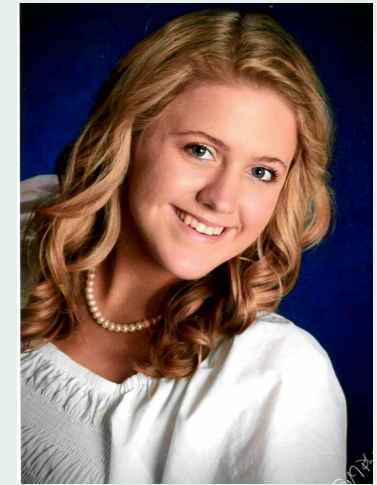
**Megan McCain**  
*Cedar Key High School*



**Jason Foley Jr.**  
*Cedar Key High School*



**Caleb Robinson**  
*Chiefland High School*



**Regan Varnes**  
*Chiefland High School*



**Tabitha Welch**  
*Chiefland High School*



**Tori Wilson**  
*Chiefland High School*



**Jewlia Mathews**  
*Riverside High School*



**Annabelle Beauchamp**  
*Dixie County High School*





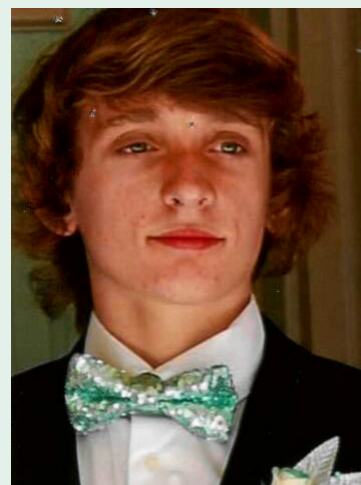
**Camden Dahm**  
*Dixie County High School*



**Peyton Hatcher**  
*Dixie County High School*



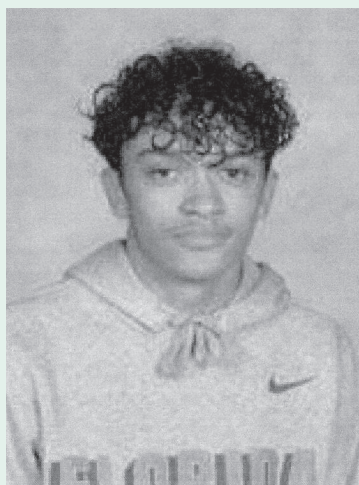
**Katie Roberts**  
*Dixie County High School*



**Joshua Robson**  
*Dixie County High School*



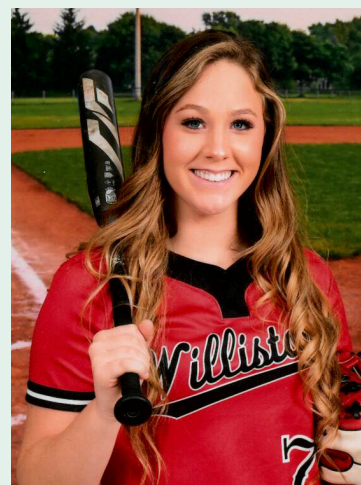
**Ansley Buck**  
*Trenton High School*



**Xavier Jones**  
*Trenton High School*



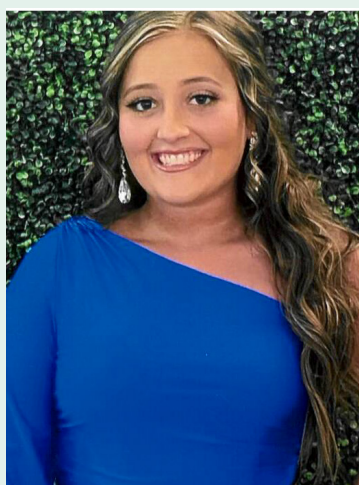
**Nathan Michael**  
*Trenton High School*



**Raegan Geiger**  
*Williston High School*



**Rylee Kurtz**  
*Williston High School*



**Kinsley Pogue**  
*Williston High School*







## First Home 'Lit Up' With High-Speed Fiber

Almost exactly one year since the Central Florida Electric Cooperative Board of Trustees voted to move forward with a fiber network project to improve electric infrastructure and provide much-needed access to high-speed internet for its members and communities, the CFEC and Fiber by Central Florida leadership team gathered to cut the ceremonial blue ribbon in front of the first home to receive fiber internet service in Levy County.

This celebration marked an important milestone in what has been a monumental effort to bring our communities gigabit-speeds at a reasonable price, with the project now having accomplished in just a few short months what other providers have been unable or unwilling to do for decades.

After General Manager Denny George welcomed everyone to the ribbon-cutting ceremony, he thanked all those who have partnered with CFEC to make such a tremendous task possible. First thanking Conexon, who helped design the fiber network and provides main-line fiber construction and splicing teams, as well as Bigam Cable Construction Inc., the fiber puller, and Benton Technical Services, the drop and home installer that have been contracted for project. Finally, he thanked Loran and Paige Brookins - the first customers of Fiber by Central Florida - for allowing the use of their home for the momentous occasion.



Chief Operating Officer George Buckner, CFEC Board President James McCain, and Chief Executive Officer Denny George cut the ceremonial ribbon in front of the first home to receive Fiber-to-the-Home internet provided by Fiber by Central Florida.

The event marked the official beginning of a new era of gigabit-speed internet at reasonable prices for the Tri-County area - provided by a local company, a company that has proudly served the community since 1939 and most importantly, is owned by those it serves.

“When you go with Fiber by Central Florida, you strengthen the very community you live in, supporting the very people that you went to school with, work with, play with and worship with. This very tough decision we made to go into this fiber business is exactly the process that we went through in 1939 and the early 1940’s to bring you electrical service.”

- Denny George, General Manager CFEC

George closed his remarks by sharing plans for the future of the Fiber-to-the-Home project. With the first circuit now complete and “lit up,” preparations are being made to hasten deployment speed in order to reach consumers in Levy, Gilchrist and Dixie counties as soon as possible and meet their goal of 3,000 Fiber-to-the-Home customers by the end of the 2023.



CFEC Attorney and CFEC Board of Trustees standing by at “First Home” Ribbon Cutting Ceremony.

From L to R: CFEC Attorney Norm D. Fugate, CFEC Board of Trustees Larry Thompson (Dist. 9), Tony Weeks (Dist. 3), Donald Lane (Dist. 5), Bo Markham (Dist. 8), Kyle Quincey (Dist. 4), Alan Mikell (Dist. 6), Carl Roof (Dist. 2), and James McCain (Dist. 1).





# Support From Our Legislators

CFEC and Fiber by Central Florida have been fortunate to have the continued support of many community leaders, local government officials and legislators both at the state and national level as we undertake this fiber effort, and were lucky enough to have a couple on hand to celebrate!

Congresswoman Kat Cammack, from Florida's 3rd Congressional District, has been an invaluable supporter of electric cooperatives like CFEC as we work to provide the necessary services our rural communities need at a price they can afford.

The CFEC and Fiber team were honored to host Congresswoman Cammack at the Co-op Headquarters in Chiefland where she "let the Kat out of the bag" and flipped the switch at the first fiber hut - lighting up our very first circuit, the Ira-Gore feeder of our Chiefland 1 Substation. With this, over 800 CFEC members received notification they are now able to schedule the home installation of their new lightning-fast Fiber-to-the-Home internet service!



### Congresswoman Kat Cammack Tours Chiefland Fiber Hut

From L to R: Fiber Operations Manager Tom Franks, Chief Executive Officer Denny George, Chief Operating Officer George Buckner, Congresswoman Cammack, Vice President of Member Services Tony Wasson, Communications Specialist Madison Redd, and FECA Director of Government Affairs Drew Love.

# OVER 250 MILES FIBER INSTALLED



### Senator Jennifer Bradley meets with CFEC and Fiber by Central Florida Team to learn more about the fiber project.

From L to R: FECA Director of Government Affairs Drew Love, CFEC Trustees Bo Markham, Carl Roof, Larry Thompson, CEO Fiber/CFEC Denny George, Senator Bradley, CFEC Trustees James McCain, Donald Lane, Alan Mikell, CFEC Attorney Norm D. Fugate, VP Broadband Finance & Accounting Bob Krefting, Conexon Project Manager Will Sullivan

CFEC and Fiber by Central Florida were also honored to host State Senator Jennifer Bradley at the cooperative to fill her in on the progress of the fiber network. Senator Bradley represents several counties in North Central Florida, including Gilchrist County and portions of Alachua County, and has been a vocal supporter of electric cooperatives like CFEC and their history of providing rural communities with reliable, affordable utility services when other for-profit companies would not.

*"The co-ops, as Denny said, they crossed this bridge years ago with electric service. And co-ops are going to lead the way across rural Florida to make sure every person who lives in the state of Florida has access to high-speed Internet."*

- State Sen. Jennifer Bradley (Dist. 9)

Members can pre-register their address for Fiber-to-the-Home service by visiting [www.fiberbycentralflorida.com](http://www.fiberbycentralflorida.com) or by using the QR Code on the next page!





FIBER BY CENTRAL FLORIDA

# CONNECT YOUR HOME WITH 100% FIBER INTERNET



## Basic Service

# \$49.99/month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

- Up to 100 MBPS Upload Speeds
- Up to 100 MBPS Download Speeds
- Optimum Performance for 0-5 Devices
- Includes Managed Wi-Fi/Wireless Router

**Don't Wait!**  
Pre-Register your address for Fiber-to-the-home service today at:  
[www.fiberbycentralflorida.com](http://www.fiberbycentralflorida.com)

## Premium Service

# \$79.99/month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

- Up to 1 GBPS Upload Speeds
- Up to 1 GBPS Download Speeds
- Optimum Performance for 5-15 Devices
- Includes Managed Wi-Fi/Wireless Router



SCAN ME



## Ultimate Service

# \$99.99/month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

- Up to 2 GBPS Upload Speeds
- Up to 2 GBPS Download Speeds
- Optimum Performance for 15+ Devices and Next-gen Devices
- Includes Managed Wi-fi/Wireless Router and Safe & Secure Package

\*\* Speeds are maximum capacities. Speeds may be slower based on user equipment or using WiFi access. Gigabit speeds are "best-effort" and not guaranteed. The device conducting the speed test must be capable of sending and receiving data at a minimum of 2 gigabits of throughput.

Learn more on our website:

 [www.fiberbycentralflorida.com](http://www.fiberbycentralflorida.com)

Follow us on Facebook:

 **Fiber By Central Florida**



## Residential Phone Service

Starting at Only

**\$29.99**/month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

Includes: Unlimited Nationwide Calling, Caller ID, Voicemail + Voicemail to Email



\*\* Not sold separately, internet service is required

\*\* Phone not included

Our phone service uses Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) technology delivered through the fiber network. The result is a superior phone connection that sets the standard when it comes to quality, reliability, and clarity.

## Safe & Secure Package **\$8** /month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

\*\*Only available with Managed Wi-Fi Service

Includes: EXPERIENCEIQ and PROTECTIQ Mobile App

**Security:** network-level security application that provides malicious website protection, anti-virus and anti-ransomware packet inspection, and intrusion detection. The service proactively monitors network traffic coming into the home, automatically blocking anything that looks suspicious.

**Parental Controls:** an extensive set of controls that allow parents to easily create and enforce online rules for the users and devices on their home networks. It provides them peace of mind by protecting their children from inappropriate or harmful content.

## Wi-Fi Extenders **\$4.99** /month

\*\*Plus applicable taxes and fees

\*\*Only available with Managed Wi-Fi Service

The Wi-Fi extender can boost the Wi-Fi signal in the harder to reach areas of your home. Your network may benefit from an extender if your home has any of the following:

- Large footprint
- Multiple floors
- Outside patio/seating area
- Pool house
- Basement
- Outdoor shop

Extenders come from the same line of products used to generate your fiber internet service and automatically switch your device to the strongest connection as you move throughout the house.



## BLUEBERRY KEY LIME PIE

### INGREDIENTS

#### Graham Cracker Crust

- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 1/2 cups finely crushed graham cracker crumbs
- 1/3 cup butter, melted

#### Key Lime Pie Filling

- 1/2 cup fresh squeezed Key lime juice
- 3 teaspoons fresh Key lime zest

- 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk
- 4 large egg yolks

#### Blueberry Topping

- 2 cups blueberries
- 1/2 cup apricot jam
- 1/4 cup water



### PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs, butter and sugar. Stir to combine. Press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom and sides of a 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 10 minutes. Let cool completely. Set aside.

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine condensed milk, egg yolks, Key lime juice and Key lime zest. Use a whisk to make sure all ingredients are combined (will naturally thicken slightly). Pour Key lime pie filling mixture into the cooled graham cracker crust. Bake pie for 10 to 15 minutes or until the pie looks almost set. Remove pie from oven and let cool to room temperature.

Heat the apricot jam and water in a small saucepan over medium heat until completely melted. Arrange blueberries in a single layer over the Key lime pie. Using a pastry brush, brush a layer of melted jam over the blueberries. Let cool. Cover pie and place in the refrigerator as it is best served cold.

## GUAVA NO-BAKE CHEESECAKE

### INGREDIENTS

#### Crust

- 2 cups graham crackers
- 1/2 stick unsalted butter, melted
- 4 tablespoons peanut butter, melted

#### Topping

- 1/2 cup guava preserves, jam, or paste
- 1 tablespoon Key lime juice
- 1 tablespoon water (as needed)

#### Filling

- 1/4 cup guava preserves
- 16 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1/3 cup sour cream
- 1 cup heavy cream, whipped to stiff peaks
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar



### PREPARATION

Place the graham crackers in a food processor and pulse until broken down into crumbs. Add the melted butter and peanut butter and pulse until thoroughly mixed. Press into a pie pan or other dish that can be refrigerated, pack tightly so that it will form a pie crust. Store in refrigerator until ready for filling.

Combine very cold heavy cream and powdered sugar into a mixing bowl. Whip or beat until stiff peaks form and store in refrigerator until ready to use.

Mix topping by combining the guava preserves (or paste) and the lime juice. Melt over low heat until smooth, remove from heat and cool completely. If the mixture is too thin, add a tablespoon of paste until desired consistency. If the mixture is too thick add water 1 teaspoon at a time until desired consistency.

Using a stand or hand mixer, combine the cream cheese and sugar and mix until completely smooth. If there are lumps, the cream cheese was too cold. Allow mixture to sit at room temperature for a few minutes and mix until smooth. Add the sour cream, lemon juice, guava preserves and vanilla extract and mix thoroughly. Fold in whipped cream by hand until combined. Do not overmix. Pour cheesecake mixture into the chilled pie crust. The guava topping can be piped on, spread on using a spoon, or poured over entire cheesecake. Allow to chill for at least two hours to properly set. Serve with more whipped cream if desired.



## 7 Ways To Pay Your Bill:



### In Office / Drive-Through

Make your payments at any CFEC location during working hours or place your payment in a drop-box after hours.



### Mail

Mail your payment to: Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc., P.O. Box 9, Chiefland, FL 32644. Allow for adequate delivery time or the payment may be late.



### Phone

Pay by phone at 352-493-2515 or toll free at 844-434-3962 through a third-party provider. A \$2.50 service fee will be charged by the provider per \$500 transaction and is NOT a charge by CFEC. Payments made by phone are posted to the member's account at the time of payment.



### Online

Go to [www.cfec.com](http://www.cfec.com) to pay online. Choose the e-check option to pay with NO FEE. To pay with credit or debit card, a \$2.50 convenience fee will be applied by the third-party payment provider.



### Power Partner App

Use CFEC's Power Partner App to make a payment. Choose e-check to pay with NO FEE. A convenience fee of \$2.50 will be charged to pay by credit card or debit card.



### Bank Draft

Set up automatic recurring bank draft payments and receive a \$1 CREDIT on your bill each month. Members can use their bank routing and account information to complete a Bank Draft Application to ensure timely payment each month. Applications can be found online at [www.cfec.com](http://www.cfec.com) under the Documents tab, then under Member Benefits & Safety Documents, or at any of our office locations.



### Bank Locations

Payments can be made at Seacoast Banks located in the CFEC service area or at Lafayette State Bank in Bell, Fla., during their normal working hours. Returned checks or payment arrangements cannot be processed by these banks.

## Lights out? *We Need To Know.*

Outdoor lighting fixtures help light up dark areas near your home or business. Outdoor lights operate automatically by coming on at dusk and going out at daylight.

*At times, the outdoor light can malfunction or become inoperative. If this happens, please contact the cooperative so that we can repair the light in a timely manner.*

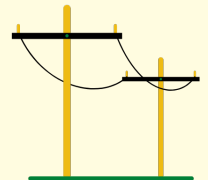


### WHEN REPORTING THE PROBLEM, CFEC NEEDS TO KNOW THE FOLLOWING:

1. A specific street address of where the outdoor light is located.
2. A description of where on the property the outdoor light is located.
3. A description of the type problem with the outdoor light.
4. Information, including your name, address, telephone number and account number.

## To Report A Power Outage:

- Call: 1-800-227-1302 or 352-493-2511, follow the prompts of the Automated Outage Response system.
- Use the Power Partner App: On the Home page, click "Outage," then select "Report an Outage." Fill out the form as to Outage information and press "Report Outage."
- Online: Click on the "Report Outage" button located at the top of the website. Fill in the "Identify Outage Location," form and click "Submit."



Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc.

~ YOUR POWER PARTNER ~

**Meeting Notice:** The Board of Trustees for Central Florida Electric Cooperative, Inc., meet on the fourth Monday of each month at 5 p.m. at the Cooperative's main office in Chiefland. Members are always welcome to attend.







PRSRRT STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ORLANDO, FL  
PERMIT NO. 3937

**MAIN OFFICE**

11491 NW 50th Ave.  
Chiefland, FL 32626-3247  
352-493-2511  
or 800-227-1302  
[www.cfec.com](http://www.cfec.com)

**Physical Address/Payment Locations**

**MAIL ADDRESS**

P.O. Box 9  
Chiefland, FL 32644-0009

**CROSS CITY OFFICE**

207 NE 210 Ave.  
Cross City, FL 32628  
352-498-7322

**INGLIS OFFICE**

167 Highway 40 West  
Inglis, FL 34449  
352-447-3553

**ADDITIONAL PAYMENT LOCATIONS**

Seacoast Banks  
Lafayette State Bank (Bell only)  
*For a complete listing of payment locations,  
go to [www.cfec.com](http://www.cfec.com).*  
*This institution is an equal opportunity  
provider and employer.*

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**Reminder:  
New Business Hours  
for CFEC Office Locations!**



**Chiefland Office:**

11491 NW 50th Ave, Chiefland, FL 32626  
Monday - Friday      Drive-Thru:  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.      8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Cross City Office:**

207 NE 210th Ave, Cross City, FL 32628  
Monday - Friday      Drive-Thru:  
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.      8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Inglis Office:**

165 Hwy 40 W, Inglis, FL 34449  
Monday Wednesday Friday  
Friday 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.