



Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

Electric • Internet • Telephone • Cable

News

Fall 2010 ~ For Customers of Bristol Tennessee Essential Services

65 Years of Service and Counting...

More than 65 years ago — on Tuesday, June 19, 1945 — representatives of six municipalities, one cooperative, the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), the Cities Service Power & Light Company and the East Tennessee Light and Power Company met in the General Shelby Hotel in Bristol, Virginia, to complete the last formal step necessary for the transfer of the utility property to the new public and government agency owners that would take place on June 29, 1945.

Nearly two hours were required to get numerous signatures on a great volume of contracts and sales agreements.

First to be signed was the purchase agreement to transfer the entire property from Cities Service Power & Light to the Tennessee Valley Authority. Then the sale agreements transferring the distribution facilities to the various municipalities were formally signed. Those included Bristol, Tennessee, and Bristol, Virginia, as well as Johnson City, Greeneville, Erwin, Elizabethton and a cooperative in North Carolina.

For Bristol, Tennessee, a \$1.3 million issuance of Electric Light & Power bonds was required to finance the transaction from TVA. BTES immediately agreed to terms of a 20-year power contract for TVA to supply power, which BTES distributed to the public at substantially lower rates.



Bristol Tennessee Electric System in the 1960s (now the Salvation Army).

In accordance with Chapter 32 Public Acts of Tennessee 1935 and the contract with TVA, a five-man power board was established by the city to have general supervision and control of the municipally owned electric system. The first board members included G.F. Helms, G.W. Vance, E.M. Woolsey, J.E. Fulwider and E.W. Crenshaw. A former East Tennessee Light & Power Company official, John L. Gray, was named general manager, working with 19 employees to serve approximately 5,300 customers. The newly created electric system located its general offices in the Cannon building at the corner of Fourth and State streets in Bristol, Tennessee.

In 1956, the general offices and warehouse facilities relocated to 37 Fourth St., which was later 137 Edgemont Ave. (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) and the location of the

Salvation Army. In 1958, Gray retired and Treasurer-Accountant E.O. Olson was named general manager. During his tenure, the revenue bonds for the original purchase of BTES were retired.

In 1965, former BTES Superintendent Earl W. Doggett was named to succeed Olson, who had retired. The downtown underground distribution system was completed under Doggett's guidance. This was the largest and most costly single project undertaken by BTES up to that time. Doggett retired in 1967.

James D. Sherfey from Glasgow, Kentucky, was hired as general manager in 1967. Plans for a new Power Service Center at 2470 Volunteer Parkway

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Celebrating 65 Years from the Beginning

We, at BTES, enjoyed throwing a 65th Birthday Party for our customers recently!



Prior to 1945, East Tennessee Light and Power, an investor-owned utility, owned the power systems in Northeast Tennessee and Southwest Virginia except for Kingsport Power and Appalachian Power. The Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) bought the system and sold it to cities and cooperatives in the area. They helped the cities set up power boards in accordance with state laws. The Bristol Tennessee City Commission signed a contract with TVA and appointed the first BTES Power Board. The Power Board sold bonds, paid TVA, hired a chief executive officer and BTES' operation was under way.

There were many homes in our BTES-designated service area that did not have electricity. The goal was to find an economical way to serve most of the homes where electricity was desired. At first, customers wanted light, then a refrigerator. A stove generally came next. Water heaters quickly followed. Washing machines caught on. Most often, this was followed by electric heat and then clothes dryers. Air conditioners followed. Many times, the heat and air conditioners were combined into an economical BTES/TVA-inspected heat pump!

In the past five years, we have taken a giant step into the future with fiber optic circuits made available to almost all of the homes and businesses in our service area. With this service, we have been making the electric system more reliable and efficient. Some refer to this as a Smart Grid. This means we can get more data to and from all parts of our electric system to help us make your service more reliable, while controlling cost compared to what it would otherwise be.

With this fiber optic system, we met one of our goals of having a data system as fast, cost effective and reliable as any place in the country. We knew that such a system would be a MUST to have a place for high-tech organizations needing high-speed data transfer to be able to locate to our area and prosper. When we started, we had a system capable of 20 Mbps Ethernet. Then we were capable of 100 Mbps Ethernet. Now we are capable of gigabit Ethernet. This change has taken place in the past five years! We now provide Internet, telephone and cable TV to even the most remote areas in our system.

BTES' goal is to provide the highest level of service to give those living and working in our area the best opportunity to prosper and have a higher quality of life!

Thanks for allowing us to serve you and...

Good Luck!

Mike Browder

BTES News

Owned and published by
Bristol Tennessee Essential Services,
serving more than 33,000 customers

Dr. R. Michael Browder
Chief Executive Officer

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Our Mission

To provide service to our customers, employees and community that exceeds their expectations.

Our Vision

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65 years Continued from Page 1

were announced in July 1968. In August 1969, revenue bonds totaling \$2.7 million were issued by BTES. Major expenditures included the Power Service Center, three new substations (King College, Steele Creek and Airport) and distribution/transmission system improvements related to the new substations.

In 1971, when the Power Service Center Open House was held, 87 employees served approximately 18,000 customers. The engineering, warehouse and garage facilities were moved to this new location on Volunteer Parkway, which is the center of the BTES service area.

Dr. R. Michael Browder, who had held the position of director of engineering and operations since 1972, was named general manager in 1977 when Sherfey left Bristol to become the general manager of Lee County Electric Cooperative in Ft. Myers, Florida.

In 1986, an addition was made to the Power Service Center to house the administrative and accounting functions, which were moved from Edgemont Avenue to 2470 Volunteer Parkway. The building on Edgemont Avenue (now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard) was sold to the Salvation Army.

Eight substations have been designed and built by BTES personnel since the 1980s — Piney Flats, Scott (named for former Board Chairman Conley Scott, who served 23 years on the Board of Directors, with 20 of those as board chairman), Medical Center, Industrial Park, Exide and Blountville Primary, which is our second 161 kV delivery point.

Since 1982, BTES has reduced electric rates to our customers seven times. BTES' rates are a little more than eight cents per kilowatt hour compared to the national average of more than 10 cents per kilowatt hour.

BTES is the city's largest in-lieu-of-tax payer and in the past five years has paid more than \$6.2 million to the city of Bristol, more than \$1.8 million to Sullivan County, and \$30,360 to the city of Bluff City.

In 1992, a team of employees developed vision and mission statements based on what had been ingrained in the BTES culture for many years... "to be the best electric distribution utility" and "to provide service to customers, employees and community that exceeds their expectations." These were updated in 2006 to include Internet, telephone and cable.

After the major snowstorm in 1998 that cut off electric service to every BTES customer and hampered BTES' efforts to restore power not only by road conditions but by lost communications, BTES decided to install a fiber optic communication system that linked the substations to our office. This existing fiber optic system expanded in the fall of 2005 when BTES began providing cable television and Internet services. In March 2006, BTES received approval from the Tennessee Regulatory Authority to offer telephone service, and in November 2006, the company began providing telephone service.

Today, BTES serves more than 33,000 electric customers with only 60 employees. BTES and its employees have received many awards, including the American Public Power Association's (APPA) E.F. Scattergood System Achievement Award in 1994 and 2009; the Tennessee Quality Governor's Award, now called the Tennessee Center for Performance Excellence Award of Excellence, in 1994; the Tennessee Municipal Electric Power Association's (TMEPA) Community Service Award in 2010; and APPA's Community Service Award in 1997 and 2010, among many others.

We are proud of the accolades we have received over the years, but we are most proud of the confidence and support our customers have shown us through 65 years of change. We thank you and look forward to the next 65 years and the exciting changes that will make BTES and our entire community even better!

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about writing a ch
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Anniversary Open House Celebration!

16 to help us celebrate...the pictures tell the story!



Grand Prize Winners



Living Life

Life is not a race – but indeed a journey. Be honest. Work hard. Be choosy. Say “thank you,” “I love you” and “great job” to someone each day. Go to church, take time for prayer. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. Let your handshake mean more than pen and paper. Love your life and what you’ve been given. It is not accidental – search for your purpose and do it as best you can. Dreaming does matter. It allows you to become that which you aspire to be. Laugh often. Appreciate the little things in life and enjoy them. Some of the best things really are free. Do not worry, less wrinkles are more becoming. Forgive – it frees the soul. Take time for yourself – plan for longevity. Recognize the special people you’ve been blessed to know. Live for today, enjoy the moment.

By artist Bonnie Mohr

The Lighter Side

An irritated father wants his son to walk to school instead of drive each day. The son, not wanting to get up earlier to make the walk, complained of the task. The father said, “School is only three blocks away. What do you think God gave you two feet for?” His son replied, “One for the brake and one for the gas!”



Pumpkin Pie

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1.5 cups pumpkin | 1 cup sugar |
| 2 tablespoons butter, melted | 1 tablespoon vanilla |
| 2 eggs | 1 teaspoon cinnamon |
| 1 large can Pet evaporated milk | 2 unbaked pie shells |

Mix first seven ingredients together and bake in two unbaked pie shells at 375 degrees for one hour.

Beef Tips and Rice

- 2 pounds of beef tips
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can French onion soup

Place beef tips and soups in a casserole dish; mix well. Cover tightly. Bake at 300 degrees for three to four hours. Serve over rice or noodles.





Two BTES Employees Honored with 40 Under Forty Award

The Business Journal of Tri-Cities, TN/VA recently named its 18th annual class of 40 Under Forty. Each year *The Business Journal* takes nominations from the Tri-Cities business community to name 40 rising stars. Honorees are chosen on the basis of the accomplishments they have already achieved in their profession and in community service, and on their perceived potential as defined by their peers and supervisors. Previous classes have produced a congressman, lieutenant governor and several CEOs.

This year's class of 40 Under Forty included two BTES employees — Supervisor of Human Resources Tara Gemmell and Supervisor of Networks Michael Parker. This year's program was keynoted by an alumnus from the inaugural class of honorees, President and CEO of K-VA-T Food Stores Steve Smith, who shared keys to his own



business success. Smith told the crowd of 200 at Johnson City's Millennium Centre, "It's good to take a moment and celebrate your successes, as we're doing here tonight, but never become complacent."

Energy Savings Tips for the Upcoming Winter

Saving money is on everyone's mind these days. We want to help by offering some simple steps that you can take to save energy and possibly lower your electric bill this winter.

Caulk and weather-strip around windows and doors to stop air leaks.

Seal gaps in floors and walls, as well as around pipes and electrical wiring.

Inspect ductwork and repair any leaks.

Keep your outside air unit clear of debris or weeds.

Change or clean air filters monthly!



Replace incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescents. They use 75 percent less energy and last 10 times longer.

Turn off lights, televisions and other appliances when not in use.

Run your dishwasher and clothes washer only when full.

Make sure your dryer's outside vent is clear, and clean the lint filter after every load.

Keep all windows and doors located near your thermostat tightly closed.

Add insulation to your attic, crawlspace and any accessible exterior wall.

Turn off the faucet when brushing your teeth. An open faucet lets about five gallons of water flow every two minutes.

Close fireplace damper when not in use.





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Your Comments Are Important

Please list the articles you found most interesting in this issue of **BTES News**, then clip out this form and mail it with your electric bill to the address below. (Fall 2010)

1. _____
2. _____
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Other comments, story ideas or questions.

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