CENTRAL VIRGINIA ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

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CVEC Electric Linemen to Showcase Their Skills
Annual Rodeo Competitions Set for March 27-28 in Caroline County

(Arrington, VA) Utility line workers' skills and equipment will be on display March 27 and 28 at the 13th Annual Terex® Gaff-n-Go Equipment & Lineman's Rodeo. Working 40 feet above the ground on a course of utility poles, these professionals will demonstrate their technical skills as they perform a variety of work tasks during timed and scored events. Each team or individual apprentice is judged on the time it takes to perform a task and, more importantly, on whether the task is performed according to safe and efficient work practices.

"Since 2003, this two-day event has celebrated the skills of those who work to keep the lights on in all types of conditions," explains Richard Johnston, executive vice president of the Virginia, Maryland and Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC), which hosts this event.

CVEC linemen Mitch DeJarnette, Steven Matney, and Brian Prue will test their ability to maneuver bucket trucks and digger derricks used to maintain electric distribution systems during the equipment operator's rodeo scheduled to kick off at 10:15 a.m. on Friday at the Caroline County Agricultural Fairgrounds. Beginning at 7:45 a.m. on Saturday, the Gaff-n-Go Lineman's Rodeo will feature competitions among individual apprentices as well as three-man journeyman teams. CVEC's Brandon White, Brandon Hudson, Mitch DeJarnette, Steven Matney, and Phillip Massie will be competing in the individual apprentice events, while J.C. Goodwin, Coty Painter, Andrew Burnett, T.R. Eubank, D.J. Noble, and Jason Purvis will compete in the journeyman team events. Judges from CVEC include Brian Prue, Randy Golladay, Brute Gardner, and Matt Wilbun. More than 225 utility workers and volunteer judges from seven states are scheduled to take part in this year's event.

The Gaff-n-Go Rodeo, named after the "gaff" or metal spike that linemen attach to their boots to assist in climbing wooden utility poles, has become one of the largest electric lineman competitions in the nation. It was first introduced and hosted 13 years ago by CVEC, a dream of then Operations Manager, C. T. Bryant. CVEC teams had traveled to compete in the International and AEP Rodeos and C.T. realized that, with Oak Ridge Estate in Nelson County as the perfect location, he knew what it would take to put a similar event together in Virginia.

It remained on those grounds in Nelson County until 2006 when it was moved to Liberty University grounds and VMDAEC became involved. The 2007 rodeo was jointly hosted. A rodeo working group was formed with representatives from the 7 VMD co-ops and one from

Dominion and a municipal utility. It was headed by C. T. Bryant and Maxie Rozell of Rappahannock Electric. They oversaw the rodeo from 2008-2010. In 2010 the rodeo moved to Richmond, first to the new State Fairgrounds and later up I-95 to its current home.

Designed for the entire family, these rodeo competitions give line crews' families and others a chance to celebrate and learn more about the skilled tasks these utility workers do to ensure reliable electric service.

About VMDAEC

Founded in 1944, VMDAEC is the trade association for 15 not-for-profit electric cooperatives that serve more than 650,000 homes, farms and businesses throughout Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. The Association provides its members with safety and utility management training; governmental affairs and legislative support; and communications services, including the publishing of *Cooperative Living* magazine. For more information, visit www.vmdaec.com or www.co-opliving.com.

About CVEC

Headquartered in Lovingston, Central Virginia Electric Cooperative is a member-owned electric-distribution utility serving nearly 35,000 meters in 14 counties across central Virginia. For more information, visit www.mycvec.com.

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