

TVA...from Page 1A

had it passed, it would have sent a clear message to TVA that a majority of local power companies were willing to stand up and fight for their customers.

The impending rate hike comes at a time when TVA is working to get a better grip on fixed costs associated with delivering power by lowering wholesale energy rates 0.5 cents per kWh and establishing a revenue neutral grid access charge.

And there are other potentially troubled waters ahead for EMC customers, as the Trump Administration has pitched the selling of TVA assets at least twice this year, once in February and again last week.

Divestiture of TVA transmission lines would mean an investment of billions of dollars by new private owners, which would likely translate to increased power rates to recover that investment.

Earlier this year, TVA President Johnson responded to the Trump Administration's proposal to sell TVA assets as outlined in President Trump's 2019 budget.

"TVA was created by an Act of Congress in 1933, and Congress has always had the power to change the role or structure of TVA,"

said Johnson. "Implementing the stated proposal in the President's 2019 budget of selling TVA's transmission assets would require Congress to act legislatively.

"In accordance with existing legislation, TVA will continue to pursue its mission of improving the quality of life for people in the region through our work in energy, the environment and economic development."

TVA's transmission assets include more than 16,000 miles of line "paid for by the power customers of the Tennessee Valley over the past 85 years," according to Johnson and TVA's statement from Feb. 12.

"The TVA does not receive any funds from the federal government, but rather is completely self-funded from its power revenues and the public debt markets, and TVA's obligations are not guaranteed by the federal government," the statement continued.

Former President Barack Obama made a similar proposal to divest TVA assets in 2013, and President Ronald Reagan also expressed interest in privatizing TVA.

Talk among local power companies in the Tennessee Valley is that the rate hikes may be aimed at aggressively paying down TVA debts in order to put

the company in a better position to divest.

U.S. Sens. Bob Corker and Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, both Republican, are opposed to proposals to sell TVA.

In other BRMEMC news, the board approved the co-op's \$88 million FY19 budget in the June 21 meeting. The new budget will cover EMC operations between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019.

The board also voted to waive a 50-signature petition requirement by the membership to propose a bylaw change. This will ensure that the motion made from the floor in last year's annual meeting will make it to the ballot ahead of the 2018 annual meeting.

Two proposed bylaw changes will appear on this year's ballot.

Members will be asked

to approve the definition of "member in good standing" as anyone whose power is not currently suspended; and secondly, the membership will be deciding whether or not voting for director candidates should be limited to each candidate's home county.

This second amendment was proposed on the floor of the 2017 annual meeting, and it would prohibit a member in Union County from voting on candidates running in Towns County, for example.

The membership will also be responsible for the election of three EMC board members this year, and all candidate forms needed to be turned in to the EMC's Nominating Committee by June 25.

At press time, six people had submitted their information for consideration by the

Nominating Committee – three from Union, two from Towns and one from Fannin – and members of the Nominating Committee met on June 26 to make their final nominations.

Petition nominations are due by July 16, and the Credentials and Elections Committee is scheduled to meet on July 24, after which time the slate of all director candidates will be finalized.

Election packets will be mailed to members this year, each containing a ballot and election notice, and elections are expected to open the week of Aug. 6 ahead of the big Sept. 8 meeting.

The Union County High School Jazz Band and Chorus will be the entertainment at the 2018 annual meeting, and doughnuts will be provided by Krispy Kreme.

Cornwell...from Page 1A



Lucas Cornwell, 8, with his mom Sabrina and sister Ariel, having fun with UCSO K-9 Deputy Lacey. Also pictured, UCSO Sgt. Jeff McConnell, left. Photo by Mark Smith

Lucas to walk over to a grassy spot and scuff his feet, then walk up the hill about 30 yards and sit on a bench, which he did.

Lacey was then given the command to find Lucas. Though thrown off at first by the similar smells of the family members, Lacey went right to Lucas and licked his hand, indicating she had found her charge.

After the demonstration with Lacey, Lucas asked both officers, "Are your trainings hard?"

McConnell described the training a dog handler has to

go through and added that they must get recertified every year, before Officer Lockwood gave Lucas the scoop on police training.

"Twelve weeks is what it takes," said Lockwood. "Now, if you want to be a Georgia State Patrol Trooper, something like that, theirs is a little bit longer. Theirs is about 17 weeks.

"And then, every year we have to do training. We have to stay up on our training, qualify with our weapons. We have physical assessments. There's all kinds of stuff that we have

to do. But it's worth it. It's a job that, if you love doing it, it shows."

Lockwood works part-time for the Blairsville Police Department, and he's also a full-time deputy with the Union County Sheriff's Office.

"There's a great working relationship between the city and the county, and that's what allows us to do what we do," said Lockwood.

McConnell and Lockwood both agreed that it was great to see a parent who did not teach their kids to be afraid of law enforcement officers.

"I thought it was cool, and it taught me about being a cop," Lucas said of his meeting with McConnell, Lockwood and Lacey. He also said he plans to do well in school so that he can pursue his dream of becoming a peace officer.

July 4th...from Page 1A

worship band, Overflow.

Fittingly, the Blue Ridge Mountain Chapter Sons of the American Revolution will be in attendance at the church to celebrate Revolutionary War-style, just as the Founding Fathers did 242 years ago.

And for those who like their Fourth of July celebrations a bit off the beaten path, the Suches Fire Department will once again host its famous fireworks display behind Woody Gap School.

Activities will begin that July 4th evening around 5:30 p.m. in Suches, when the concessions start to offer burgers, hot dogs, drinks and candy. Plus, the Gaddistown Homemakers will be selling delicious ice cream to cap things off.

As always, there will be plenty of patriotic music leading up to the Suches Fireworks, and there will even be a duck race at 8 p.m. at the creek behind the school.

When night falls in Suches on Independence Day, the sky lights up for a glorious, family-friendly, fun-filled occasion of patriotic fireworks for all.

Residents and visitors are encouraged to bring blankets

and chairs that evening, and all proceeds will go to the Suches Fire Department and Woody Gap School.

Local students earn honors from Kennesaw State

Kennesaw State University recently named more than 3,100 students to the President's List, in recognition of their academic excellence for the Spring 2018 semester.

To achieve the honor of being on the President's List, each Kennesaw State student must have satisfactorily completed at least 9 semester hours with a term grade point average of 4.0.

Local students are: Jackson Burks; Joyce Britt; Reagan Hooper; Jessica Herr; Emaleigh Herum all of Blairsville; Wyatt Larkin and Taylor Dockery of Morganton.

Kennesaw State University congratulates the more than 5,600 students named to the Spring 2018 Dean's List. Students enrolled at least 9 credit hours and with a grade point average of at least 3.5 were named to the list.

Local students are: Cassandra Johnson; William Donaldson; Corey Harris; Joseph Baker all of Blairsville; and Cesar Bustamante; Jamie Case; Abi David; Amber Williams all of Young Harris and Natalie Barnard of Hiawassee.